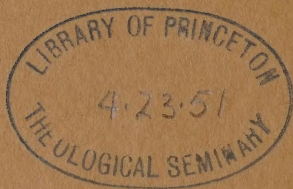


CHILDREN'S REACTIONS
TO RADIO ADAPTATIONS
OF JUVENILE BOOKS

Mae O'Brien

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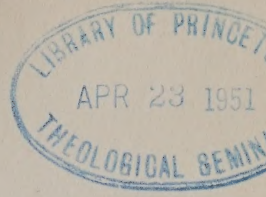
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Max O'Rand

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OF JUVENILE BOOKS

Mae O'Brien

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Mae O'Brien

September 12, 1950

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"A radio program is truly educational only as it elicits a response on the part of those who listen, only as it gives rise to a desirable change in thought or feeling or action, only as it contributes in a positive and constructive way to clarity of understanding, to discrimination in judgment, to an enhanced appreciation of worthy values."

William C. Bagley

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

THE producer who creates children's programs, the educator who guides children's listening, and the child for whom the broadcast is intended each has a unique function in the advancement of juvenile radio. Improvement in children's programs is influenced by the extent of coordination among these three, the producer, the educator, and the child. The educator's position is a particularly strategic one in bringing about this coordination for he is the intermediary through whom children's reactions can be made *directly* available to the producer of juvenile radio programs.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The extent of children's radio listening has been investigated in research studies, many of which were well summarized in Herzog's survey¹ which was conducted under the auspices of the Radio Council on Children's Programs. She found that average listening ranged from $5\frac{1}{4}$ hours² to $18\frac{1}{2}$ hours³ weekly. Stone's figure of $5\frac{1}{4}$ hours represented the weekly average of a sixth grade in California and was comparable to the figure found by Eisenberg⁴ in a study of a sixth grade in New York whose average weekly listening was $6\frac{1}{4}$ hours. Lewis and McFadden state: "The average child to-day spends fourteen hours each week listening to radio."⁵ The extent of out-of-school listening is effectively summarized in Tyler's statement: "Children spend more time listening to the radio than they do attending school."⁶

William B. Levenson, in an address before the School Broadcast Conference in Chicago, called attention to the rapid rise in radio listening:

Most of us are aware that within one generation there has developed a powerful influence in American life. When we recognize that the American home has its set turned on five hours a day, when the school child during the year listens to radio more than he does to his teacher, we readily understand why radio is one of our three great mass communication media.⁷

That children listen extensively to radio programs needs no verification for people in direct contact with boys and girls. The investigator found that the best way to obtain information on the extent of listening was through informal conversations, in which children were approached off guard, so to speak, and not in competition with other children. From such conversations it was found that general group discussions or written questionnaires on out-of-school listening revealed the fact that the programs mentioned were sometimes those which a ten-year-old child would like to hear rather than programs actually heard. The feeling of "keeping up with the Joneses" was also evident. Some children liked to pretend they were ardent listeners, simply because their classmates listened. For a ten-year-old to say he had heard a 9:30 evening program put him entirely out of the baby class among his peers.

In these informal conversations it was noted that listening ranged all the way from none at all, by a child who said her mother permitted "nothing but the symphony and I don't like that," to a radio "fan" who, without aided recall or hesitation, not only named nine favorite programs, but gave their exact hour, day, and station. The fact that this ten-year-old boy had few other interests and that his studies were below average presented an acute problem. It might be added that the other extreme is also a problem for the teacher.

At the present time many producers of juvenile radio, whether for public service or commercial programs, attempt to cover the gamut of the juvenile age level -- about seven to fourteen years of age. This procedure is desirable from the sponsor's point of view. To him, the age level of the child who eats Wheaties is relatively

unimportant. The producer's goal is to attract the largest number of listeners possible, regardless of age. This procedure might also be justifiable on the basis of individual differences. That certain ten-year-olds might like the same type of program as certain twelve-year-olds is possible. If one child does not tune in, another child might. Therefore, a wide age range seems reasonable.

While the producer of juvenile commercial programs may justify his attempt to cover a wide range of ages, it is open to considerable question whether or not it is desirable for school broadcasts either from the child's point of view or from the educator's. In broadcasts used extensively in schools, the age range of interests in most classes is more closely grouped than in out-of-school listening; therefore, there is a need for a consideration of age groups in planning school broadcasts. In Cuthbert's study the peak of juvenile radio listening was reached at about the ten-year-old level.⁸ Cuthbert pointed out that older children in junior high school preferred feature broadcasts such as dance bands. It is reasonable to assume that children younger than nine or ten years have an earlier retiring schedule; furthermore, many of them have not reached the maturity level necessary to follow the somewhat complex sequence of dramatic shows. The Wilmette, Illinois, Study⁹ indicated a higher average weekly listening time for fourth grade children than for eighth grade. DeBoer reported: "Emotional response of children in groups 8-11 years as measured by EDR [Electro Dermal Response] changes and respiratory changes were more numerous than in the higher age groups."¹⁰ Reid¹¹ found in his study of classroom audiences of the American School of the Air that the *Tales from Far and Near* series was heard most by children in the fifth and sixth grades and that this radio series of book adaptations had a larger audience than any of the other series broadcast on the American School of the Air. The present study, which undertakes a long-term evaluation of the series *Tales from Far and Near* should therefore be helpful in the planning of future radio or televised programs adapted from juvenile books.

Since the ten-year level is about the middle of the age range of elementary school children, a study of their reactions to certain programs designed for in-school listening should contribute to the advancement of juvenile programs.

The technical improvement in radio reception, brought about through the invention of frequency modulation, adds to the timeliness of the present study. The shift of responsibility for school broadcasts from the networks to local stations has already occurred among the major networks. The importance of the local stations in future school broadcasts was summarized by the Columbia Broadcasting System as early as 1945:¹² "F.M. licenses to educational agencies will result in a greater use of radio than ever before in American classrooms, but the changed conditions make it practically certain that almost all programs heard in classrooms will be from local F.M. stations."

Tyler¹³ reported that on June 7, 1948, the Columbia Broadcasting System announced its suspension of the American School of the Air. The reason given by Tyler was that the series had outlived its usefulness. (Such a conclusion is debatable; however, it is not the purpose of the present study to investigate the causes for discontinuing this public service series for children. In passing it might be said, however, that the financing of such a series was probably no small factor in the decision.) Tyler concluded that the eighteen years of service rendered to American schools by the American School of the Air "brings to a close school broadcasting on a national basis." In the same article, Tyler recommends: "Ideally, every large city should have its own broadcasting facilities, so that radio programs for in-school use may be made available for use in all classrooms, in accordance with long-time curriculum development programs. . . . Should not local stations, in cooperation with the local schools, develop local schools of the air to replace the abandoned national program?"¹⁴ Levenson sounds a warning note, however: "In the few adequately financed educational stations now operating, we may be long on brains but we're certainly short on talent."¹⁵

Since national networks such as the Columbia Broadcasting System have pioneered in presenting broadcasts for the schools, children's evaluation, over a period of five years, of one of the most popular school broadcast series should be helpful in future productions of school programs by local stations. The limited funds of most local stations necessitate a careful evaluation in order to avoid errors made and to uphold the standards previously attained by the major networks.

Although televised programs for schools are still in the embryonic stage, the use of book adaptations as a basis for televised puppet shows has been on the air. Fairy tales and *Aesop's Fables* have already been produced on commercial televised programs.¹⁶ As early as 1931 a marionette show was produced by Station WXX, Wheaton, Maryland, the first marionette show performed over television. Such programs have educational implications, and a study of a radio series based on book adaptations may provide a basis for the evaluation of future televised programs as well as radio programs.

The Chicago public school system has already launched an experimental study of television for school use. Although progress at present is slow in school televised programs, the possibilities for the production of such programs should be kept in mind throughout the study of these radio programs.

The investigator was asked to evaluate a local televised puppet program of *Alice in Wonderland*. The juvenile audience present seemed to manifest keen interest in the show, and the production was generally good. During the last half hour, however, for lack of something better, the local station subjected the children to a movie, *The Call of the Wild*. Its antiquated techniques made it actually ludicrous. This, program was briefly but effectively evaluated by a ten-year-old child, who during the televised movie, scornfully remarked, "Corn!" Substitutes for juvenile televised programs in the form of second-rate movies should be avoided. Until better juvenile programs are created, television time for children is likely to be filled with inferior material.

The wider use of school recordings is seen in the

increase of their loan and exchange reported monthly in the Federal Radio Education Committee's *Service Bulletin of the FREC*, U.S. Office of Education. Brief evaluations of children's recordings also appear in *The Elementary English Review*, *The Journal of the AER* (Association for Education by Radio), and *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Systematic thorough evaluation of recordings in elementary classrooms has not yet been widely established. In the meantime, entire transcribed radio series are being manufactured on permanent twelve-inch recordings for school use.¹⁷

Since national networks are no longer producing programs for schools, and since local F.M. stations are likely to have limited budgets for off-the-air programs, recordings of broadcasts for school use will probably continue to increase. Evaluation of these recordings should precede their wide acceptance in schools. In the present study the techniques employed for guiding children in rating radio programs might also be utilized for rating recordings intended for classroom utilization.

An immediate need for a study of children's reactions to radio grew out of the investigator's work with elementary school children, in which radio programs were considered not only a supplementary aid for instruction but an integral part of the children's classroom experiences. In view of the large variety of activities suggested for the elementary school curriculum, the evaluation undertaken centers around the important question, "It is justifiable to use ten hours of each child's school year to listen to radio?"

The need for more classroom evaluation of radio was also emphasized by Harold Kent in the statement:

Improvement of these programs cannot come from the people who sit in offices as I sit in an office downtown. They've got to come from people in the field, and every effort that we make from the standpoint of evaluation is concerned with the attitudes, the opinions, the ideas, the criticisms of those children sitting in their seats in the classroom and the teachers who have those children with them all through the day.¹⁸

THE PROBLEM

The problem was to investigate:

- 1) The feasibility of obtaining ratings from children of about ten years of age with respect to school broadcasts consisting of adaptations of juvenile books
- 2) The constancy or trustworthiness of obtained ratings
- 3) The characteristics and qualities of broadcasts that received high ratings; and, to a limited extent,
- 4) The relationship of in-school broadcasts to the total curriculum

THE PURPOSES

The underlying purposes of the investigation were to present findings pertaining to such problems as:

- 1) Ways in which children's reactions to broadcasts could be made more directly available to producers of public service and of commercial juvenile broadcasts
- 2) Ways in which certain types of radio materials might be more widely utilized in the elementary school classroom

Chapter II

PROCEDURES

THE procedures of this study were based, for the most part, on children's written and oral reactions to programs heard over a period of five years. A radio series of book adaptations designed for classroom listening was chosen for evaluation. The procedures described in the present chapter are along the lines suggested by Levenson: "Evaluation to be effective should be continuous . . . though the sample may be small, the reactions are more carefully studied. Surely it is more desirable to have several evaluations made than many hasty judgments given indefinitely."¹

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT FOR LISTENING

Direct contact with children over a continuous period of time was necessary in order to study the feasibility of obtaining children's reactions to school broadcasts. The classroom provided a controlled listening audience during this five-year study of children's response to radio programs. Each broadcast was an integral part of the child's total school experience. The activity in radio listening and evaluation was not carried out in place of some other school subject; consequently, pupils' ratings of broadcasts were unaffected by comparison between their interest in the broadcast and in the activity for which it was a substitute.

The controlled classroom limited the number of listeners and consequently did not provide a large number of ratings for each broadcast, but the ratings produced were made by children known to have heard the broadcast. The investigator therefore did not have to depend on

ratings of programs by children who said they had heard them at home. (See also page 2.) Close day-by-day contact provided an opportunity, furthermore, to evaluate procedures in obtaining pupil ratings.

Provision for adequate radio listening facilities was an important detail in the procedure. A well-serviced radio in a room removed from street noise was essential. In "tuning in," care was taken to set the dial where reception was clearest before increasing the volume. This check on the detail of proper dialing minimized reception difficulties, which were not a problem during the study.

The classroom made possible direct observation of children by juvenile radio specialists such as directors, producers, and script writers.² Their observations provided a common basis for the exchange of opinion with the investigator.

INTERMEDIATE GRADE CHILDREN'S REACTIONS

The main subjects who participated in this study were fifth and sixth grade pupils of the Horace Mann School of Teachers College, Columbia University. Most of the ratings were obtained from fifth grade children (see page 22); however, comparisons were made with those from other intermediate groups. The ages of the intermediate grade children ranged from about nine to about twelve years. Since there are approximately 6,000,000 intermediate grade children in public, private and parochial schools in the United States,³ and since research and surveys (see pages 1, 2) indicate that a large portion of these 6,000,000 children listen to juvenile radio, a study of the techniques for obtaining preferences of even a small segment of this group should prove valuable in the advancement of juvenile programs.

RADIO ADAPTATIONS OF JUVENILE FICTION

The radio series *Tales from Far and Near* was utilized to obtain the ratings which constituted the basic data of this study. This series, which was an annual feature of the School of the Air of the Americas, was presented

by the Columbia Broadcasting System on Thursday mornings from 9:15 to 9:45 o'clock, from October through May. The programs consisted for the most part⁴ of radio adaptations from "outstanding" children's books selected by a committee of the Association for Arts in Childhood (see page 113). During the five-year period 1939-1943 the number of programs heard in each series were 21, 25, 22, 23, and 24, respectively.

The series *Tales from Far and Near* was selected for the following reasons:

1. This series was the only one heard during school hours that seemed to compete in pupil interest and enjoyment with the familiar commercial broadcast.

2. Like the commercial, the series could be understood by merely "tuning in." No pre-broadcast preparation was essential for comprehension or enjoyment.

3. Adventurous episodes similar to the juvenile commercial broadcast but believed to be superior in content seemed to make up the majority of the programs.

4. A radio series based on books seemed particularly well adapted to the needs of children of intermediate grades in which independent leisure reading is one of the major objectives in the reading program.

5. The broadcasts seemed to provide enriching materials for informal dramatization, an important activity in the intermediate grades.

6. For the most part, the programs seemed to be within the maturity level of intermediate grade children.

7. The series was one in which the children themselves could share in the making. Their ratings influenced whether or not other groups of children would be encouraged to listen.

8. Through their evaluation they were participating in a community enterprise within their level of maturity. They understood that they themselves were able to contribute to the advancement of their own radio programs.

9. It was believed that the study of the series *Tales from Far and Near* might help in raising standards for juvenile broadcasts.

INDIVIDUAL RATING FORM FOR OBTAINING CHILDREN'S WRITTEN REACTIONS

By means of a rating form adapted to children's use, individual written ratings were obtained over a five-year period (1939-1943). Experimentation with various phrasings and mechanical setups during the first two years resulted in a final rating form which was used throughout the last three series. Although the phrasing on the rating forms for the first two years differed from that of the remaining three, the major purpose of finding the extent of children's enjoyment of these programs was preserved throughout the five-year period.

In the 1939-1940 series a rating form was used at the end of the series only. The children were asked to select:

- 1) One of Top Three Favorites of the entire series
- 2) Broadcasts rated Very Good (not including those rated Top Three)
- 3) Programs rated Poor
- 4) The remaining programs in order of preference
- 5) Programs not heard

In the 1940-1941 series a revised rating form was used at the end of the series only. The children were asked to check:

- 1) Liked Program
- 2) Disliked Program
- 3) Best One
- 4) Poorest One
- 5) Programs not heard

In the remaining three seasons (1941-1943), a third and final revision of the rating form was used. One of the four following columns was checked opposite each broadcast title:

- 1) Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it"
- 2) Good -- "enjoyed most of it"
- 3) Fair -- "enjoyed only parts of it"
- 4) Poor -- "enjoyed none of it"

This third rating form appeared to be the clearest and most practical, and well adapted to the maturity level of the children using it. Only one written check was

necessary, thus minimizing handwriting, an important detail at the ten-year-old level. (See pages 16 and 17 for copy of the individual rating form used in rating each program immediately after it was heard and again at the end of the entire series.)

GUIDING CHILDREN'S USE OF RATING FORMS

In guiding the children in the use of the rating forms it was believed that, if the children thoroughly understood the various purposes for the ratings, the mechanical details would be carried out more intelligently and effectively. Cooperative planning between the children and the investigator was believed to be the best avenue of approach to this understanding; therefore, *guidance in* rather than *directions for* rating the programs was stressed in the plan.

Children were encouraged to question the procedures. What are independent judgments? Why not talk about the programs first and then make our written rating? Plenty of time was taken to make sure that each child understood the meaning of the various parts of the rating forms. In this way the groups shared in the actual planning as well as in the carrying out of the directions; furthermore, the children understood that the results would be made available to the broadcasting company.

Details concerning the children's directions for rating varied the first two years from those of the last three years; therefore, the first two years will be discussed separately. During the 1939-1940 series, the ratings were obtained at the end of the series only. The list of programs was put on the board, and the children were asked to list programs rated One of the Top Three Favorites; those programs rated Very Good; and programs rated Poor. They were also asked to list those programs not heard, and to arrange the other programs in order of preference. This last direction proved too difficult for these ten-year-old children. Their reactions to the arranging of programs in order of preference were summed up by a child who said, "I tried doing it, but I don't think it is worth much." The data obtained from the order of prefer-

ence ratings were eliminated and were not included in the table of preferences presented on page 40. The 1939-1940 series, however, did provide findings on the question of whether or not the programs were generally enjoyed and also indicated the programs rated highest.

Since the phrasing One of Top Three Favorites involves somewhat rigid selection, the data were not compared with the programs of the last four years; however, the series did provide data for comparison purposes with other groups. These comparisons are described more fully in Chapter III, page 43.

Facilities prevented hearing all of the 1939-1940 programs off the air; however, transcriptions were available. Eight out of the twenty-one programs were heard from transcriptions at a time convenient for the group. It must be noted that some of these programs were heard a few days apart; therefore, the weekly interval between programs was interrupted in the 1939 series. In the remaining series of programs, however, the programs were heard off the air at weekly intervals.

In order to check the question of whether or not children tended to rate a program just to be rating it, the investigator inserted a title of a program that no one had heard but one that had appeared in the manual for the series. It was interesting to note that this title appeared in the Did Not Hear list of each child who participated in the ratings.

At the close of the 1939-1940 series the investigator concluded that the rating form was too complex and that it required too much handwriting for ten-year-old children. An effort was made to eliminate these weaknesses in the 1940-1941 series, during which the programs were heard off the air at weekly intervals from October through April. As in the 1939 series, the ratings were obtained at the end of the series. Although different phrasing from that of the 1939 series was used, it was possible to obtain findings on the most enjoyed programs. Handwriting was minimized to a few check marks, by having a typed list of the programs for each child. After drawing a line through the programs not heard, the children

were asked to rate each program on the basis of one of four possibilities: Liked Program; Disliked Program; Best One; Poorest One. Since judgment and power of discrimination, rather than memory, was being sought in these ratings, precautions were taken to prevent guessing. The children were allowed to read the manual of the series in order to identify the program. If a program could not be remembered after seeing the descriptive account of it, the children were encouraged to omit it.

During the 1940-1941 series the investigator was cooperating in the national study of this series under the leadership of the Evaluation of School Broadcasts, Ohio State University. Each week a questionnaire was filled out and sent to Ohio State University. This experience created a need for more concrete data upon which to base judgments; therefore, plans were made to obtain ratings directly from the children immediately after they heard each program of the next series.

At the beginning of the 1941-1942 series, the investigator discussed with the children the plan of rating each program immediately after it was heard. As in the previous series, plenty of time was taken to discuss the meanings of the phrasings in each part of the rating form. The children had no difficulty in distinguishing between Excellent ("enjoyed all of it"), Good ("enjoyed most of it"), Fair ("enjoyed only parts of it"), and Poor ("enjoyed none of it"). After each program, each child wrote the title and rating on a piece of theme paper. Without discussion the children rated the programs. With one child's help, the papers were checked by the investigator individually to see that each had a check, and to write in absences of those who did not hear. In this way an exact record was kept of the programs that had been heard. The papers were kept until the next week, when they were passed out again for ratings.

After the ratings were made and the papers collected, four children went to the blackboard. While the investigator watched each paper, a child dictated the various ratings to the four children at the board who were

assigned to keep account of the respective four ratings. This activity added to the meaningfulness of the entire project. Occasionally, errors would be made in dictating or adding up the totals and the job would have to be done again. For the most part, however, the activity of rating the programs was not too complex for these ten-year-old children, and it provided a meaningful experience within their maturity level. (See pages 16 and 17 for a sample of a child's rating of programs made at the end of the broadcast and again at the end of the series.)

At the end of the 1941-1942 series, each child was given a typed list of the programs and a notation after those which they had not heard. This information was taken from the end of the broadcast ratings, and, as in the previous series, precautions were taken to prevent guessing. The manuals were again available. If, after the aided recall of the manual, he was still unable to remember, the child was told to write the word "forgot" after that program. Since the forgotten programs did not have two ratings, they could not be used in the treatment of the data pertaining to the comparisons between the two ratings.

During the ratings at the end of the 1941-1942 series a child raised the question of whether or not he could rate a program he had heard at home. Since the program had been heard under quite different conditions at home, it was not included in the comparisons of the two ratings. Before the papers were handed in, each child was reminded to check carefully his individual list and the investigator also checked each one individually; consequently, no program had to be omitted because it had not been checked properly.

The rating form used the last three years proved a practical means of obtaining ten-year-old children's reactions to radio programs. It is also recommended for the evaluation of other areas such as movies and comic magazines. The rating form, furthermore, was used by other teachers of ten-year-old children. No difficulty in its use was reported by these teachers.

TALES FROM FAR AND NEAR
INDIVIDUAL RATING FORM

Elaine Ross

END OF THE BROADCAST RATING
1943-1944

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name of Program</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor^a</i>
10-14-43	All Aboard the Whale	x			
10-21-43	Bat	x			
10-28-43	The Fast Sooner Hound	x			
11-4-43	Fox Island	x			
11-18-43	Anything Can Happen on a River	x			
12-2-43	Cinder Ike		Did	Not	Hear
12-9-43	Shadow in the Pines	x			
12-16-43	Nathaniel's Witch	x			
1-6-44	Jim Davis	x			
1-13-44	Francie on the Run	x			
1-20-44	Snow Treasure		Did	Not	Hear
1-27-44	Mountain Born				x
2-3-44	Haym Solomon	x			
2-10-44	The Great Geppy	x			
2-17-44	Little Women		x		
2-24-44	How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick				x
3-2-44	The Golden Fleece		x		
3-9-44	The Ship That Flew	x			
3-16-44	Knight of the Sea		x		
3-23-44	Dougal's Wish		x		
3-30-44	Water Babies		x		
4-13-44	The Story of Dr. Dolittle	x			
4-20-44	Tall Hunter				x
4-27-44	Black Beauty	x			

- ^a Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it"
 Good -- "enjoyed most of it"
 Fair -- "enjoyed only parts of it"
 Poor -- "enjoyed none of it."

TALES FROM FAR AND NEAR
INDIVIDUAL RATING FORM

Elaine Ross

END OF THE SERIES RATING
1943-1944

<i>Date</i>	<i>Name of Program</i>	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor^a</i>
10-14-43	All Aboard the Whale	x			
10-21-43	Bat			x	
10-28-43	The Fast Sooner Hound		x		
11-4-43	Fox Island	x			
11-18-43	Anything Can Happen on a River		x		
12-2-43	Cinder Ike		Did	Not	Hear
12-9-43	Shadow in the Pines		x		
12-16-43	Nathaniel's Witch	x			
1-6-44	Jim Davis	x			
1-13-44	Francie on the Run		x		
1-20-44	Snow Treasure		Did	Not	Hear
1-27-44	Mountain Born				x
2-3-44	Haym Solomon	x			
2-10-44	The Great Geppy	x			
2-17-44	Little Women		x		
2-24-44	How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick				x
3-2-44	The Golden Fleece		x		
3-9-44	The Ship That Flew	x			
3-16-44	Knight of the Sea			x	
3-23-44	Dougal's Wish	x			
3-30-44	Water Babies	x			
4-13-44	The Story of Dr. Dolittle	x			
4-20-44	Tall Hunter				x
4-27-44	Black Beauty	x			

^a Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it"
 Good -- "enjoyed most of it"
 Fair -- "enjoyed only parts of it"
 Poor -- "enjoyed none of it."

CLASS DISCUSSIONS FOR OBTAINING CHILDREN'S ORAL REACTION

In the class discussions concerning the various programs, the children were encouraged to give specific examples from specific broadcasts to illustrate their opinions. By so doing, it was believed that children's oral reactions would be less vague and more genuine. A conscious effort was made not to inject the teacher's ideas concerning individual programs, yet at the same time to guide the discussion in such a way that children would keep to the point. The extent to which this ideal was accomplished cannot be measured, but it can be evaluated through the reading of the record of such a discussion, an example of which has been published.⁵ It must be remembered that oral discussions concerning radio were carried on in quite the same general way as discussions pertaining to comics, to problems of group living, or to subject matter read from books.

The oral discussions pertaining to radio programs were more frequent during the first two years of the study. There arose a question as to whether too frequent discussions affected the children's enjoyment; therefore, during the last three years the discussions were much less frequent at the close of programs. A full discussion of the series as a whole took place at two separate periods after an entire series was heard. The findings pertaining to these discussions were used extensively in Chapter IV which concerns factors affecting children's ratings.

Since the investigator was present during each broadcast, it was possible to make written notes concerning the children's overt expressions during the programs. These notes were helpful in identifying parts that seemed most enjoyed, especially the humorous parts, or the most exciting parts. The limitation of such data, however, was also recognized; for certain children among these ten-year-olds gave no outward evidence whatsoever of their feelings. Some sat quietly, with sober faces, and listened. Only through some casual, informal comment, made after the program, did they indicate their reaction. On the other hand, certain children's outward manifestation were most obvious, as in the extreme case of the boy who

slowly aimed his imaginary gun, closed one eye, pulled the trigger, and killed the Indian at just the right moment in *The Tall Hunter*.

ATTITUDE OF PUPILS TOWARD PROCEDURES

A desirable, cooperative attitude on the part of the children was essential in this study. This rather intangible but highly important factor was taken into account by having the children share in the planning and evaluation of the procedures as each series was rated. (See pages 14-15.)

It is not the purpose of this study to examine characteristics of the intermediate age child; nevertheless it is pertinent to call attention to a characteristic that often is exhibited by children of about ten years of age -- namely, a tendency to be quite spontaneous, frank and honest in their expressions of what is fair or unfair, genuine or artificial. "It's a gyp" is a forceful, familiar outburst hurled at contemporaries and adults, parents and teachers alike, who, in the judgment of the intermediate grade child, warrant an expression of righteous indignation. Similarly, "That's fair enough" generally precedes wholehearted cooperation, even though the circumstances might involve somewhat severe disciplinary treatment. These two expressions revealing children's attitudes influenced the investigator's everyday guidance of the children during this study.

Children's attitudes have also been taken into account in other studies. Concerning the response to the questionnaire of fifty-four questions submitted to sixth grade children over a period of three months, February, March and April, 1935, Eisenberg reported:

The time required by the pupils to fill out the questionnaire varied from forty minutes to one hour. In all classes, without exception, the pupils cooperated cheerfully and eagerly. The favorable reception of this inquiry may be accounted for in three ways. The information requested was near to these children's hearts; the children were "chockfull" of facts, reactions, and opinions which veritably made their fingers twitch so

eager were they to answer; and the task was a pleasant interlude in their daily class routine.

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In several classes the investigator tested the willingness and cooperation of the children. For example, in five classes the lunch period interfered with the completion of the questionnaire. Upon their return after lunch, the pupils were asked to vote whether they wanted to go on from where they had left off. Invariably they voted in the affirmative. In three classes the pupils decided to stay away from such attractive periods as 'shop' (for boys) and cooking (for girls) in order to complete the questionnaire. In only one paper out of a total of 3,345 tabulated did a pupil show a frivolous attitude in writing the answers.⁶

McKay⁷ also reported that he received an enthusiastic response toward the rating of programs made at home during the two weeks in February covered in his study.

In the two studies mentioned, the short period of time required for the ratings might have accounted for the novelty and attractiveness in the situation. The writer observed no such exuberance in any of the five years of the present study. The rating was a job to do, a responsibility to fulfill. No one refused to rate the broadcasts any more than he would have refused to participate in other activities for which he had a share in the planning. The seriousness of the task as well as the enjoyment of it was emphasized with each new group.

In the present study, ratings were made of a new program each week. The emphasis on the obligation and responsibility of the children to do a thorough job made the project of rating the programs a more meaningful classroom experience. Another indication of the children's general attitude was evident in their answer to the question, "Would you recommend this series for next year's group?" At the close of each of the five years there was unanimous agreement that future groups should hear the programs.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER GROUPS

Comparisons were made of the ratings of certain broadcasts by children who participated in the five-year study with other intermediate grade groups. The groups included 712 children in the following schools:

1. Children in Public School Number 42, New York City, rated three programs which were heard through transcriptions by grades four, five and six in their classrooms.

2. Children in Corpus Christi School, New York City, rated two of the same programs used in P.S. 42. The programs were heard through transcriptions by grades four and five in their classrooms.

3. Children in New Haven, Connecticut, grades five and six, rated two different programs, heard off the air.

4. In the Horace Mann School, children in a sixth grade rated the 1940-1941 series, heard off the air.

Besides the use of the above children's ratings for comparison purposes, there were also available the ratings made of *Tales from Far and Near* in the Ohio State University studies. A preliminary study⁸ included the evaluation of eight broadcasts of the 1939-1940 series. These ratings were based on children's ratings, which were compared with the ratings of the main subjects in the present study.

A more extensive evaluation study was undertaken by Ohio State University during the 1940-1941 series.⁹ The ratings obtained were based on teachers' judgments which were compared with the ratings of the main subjects in the present study. The teachers represented fourteen different states. The investigator was one of the teachers cooperating in this national project and acted as coordinator for the group of eastern teachers who were active in the project. Participation in the Ohio evaluation study provided a good background for the investigator's work in the present study. See Table 1, page 22.

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

The accumulation of ratings described on the preceding pages provided a basis for:

- 1) Determining an order of merit ranking of the popu-

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF BROADCASTS, MAIN SUBJECTS, AND RATINGS

Year (Oct.-May)	Grade	Number of Main Subjects		Number of Broadcasts ^b	Number of Ratings	
		Maximum	Average		End-of- Broadcast	End-of Series
1939-1940	5	17	11	21	-	239
1940-1941	5	17	16	25	-	391
1941-1942	5	20	18	22	395	395
1942-1943	5	20	17	23	395	395
1943-1944	6	23	20	24	479	479
Total		97		115	1,269	1,899
Overlap ^a		18		5		
Total including overlap		79		110		3,168

^a At the close of Grade 5, in 1942, two children left the school. The remaining 18 continued in sixth grade and 5 children entered. The total of different listeners is 79.

^b Ratings of the last program in the series are identical, in the end-of-the-broadcast and end-of-the-series ratings; therefore, the last program was eliminated in the comparisons of the 1941-1942, and in the 1942-1943 series. Time elapsed in the 1943-1944 series, consequently the two ratings of the last program are not identical.

Five programs were repeated over the five-year period, one of which was repeated twice; therefore, there is an overlap of six even though there were five different programs.

Sad Faced Boy, *The Great Guppy*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, *Haym Solomon* were repeated once. *One String Fiddle* was repeated twice.

The story, *The Poor Count's Christmas*, was used twice but in entirely different productions; therefore, it is not included in the overlap.

larity of programs in each yearly series from 1941 to 1943, for the purpose of finding the extent of general enjoyment of these programs by children and for the purpose of finding those programs that had received extremes in ratings over the three-year period

- 2) Determining order of merit ranking of popularity of programs in the 1939-1940 series and 1940-1941 series in terms of the end-of-the-series ratings only
- 3) Indicating, to some extent, the trustworthiness of the cumulative group ratings through a comparison between ratings submitted for each program at the end of each broadcast and ratings of all programs after an entire series had been completed
- 4) Appraising the representativeness of the judgments of selected groups of children through a comparison between the ratings of certain programs by these groups and by larger numbers of children in public, private, and parochial schools, including teachers' judgments

Findings with regard to the relative popularity of programs in each series provided a basis for identifying programs that stood high in favor as compared with programs that had relatively little appeal.

A further treatment of these data concerned the examination of certain broadcasts that had received extremes in ratings. This treatment resulted in the analysis of certain characteristics which had evolved. Children's oral reactions were utilized in formulating these characteristics. In this phase of the study, the investigator's judgment was compared with that of three competent judges who listened to transcriptions of four programs.

Adult criteria for the appraisal of certain children's books upon which juvenile radio programs were based were also considered in this study.

The data obtained through the individual written ratings of the children were supplemented by longhand and stenographic records, Dictaphone recordings,¹⁰ and transcriptions, all of which aided in obtaining data concerning children's oral reactions.

SUMMARY

Continuous, direct contact with children of about ten years of age during a five-year period was the basis of the procedure of this study. A network radio series of book adaptations produced for in-school listening provided data for analysis of certain programs. Individual written ratings of programs and class discussions by the main subjects were utilized in the evaluation of specific programs in the five series. Certain programs were rated by other groups and used for comparison purposes.

Techniques for recording discussion and for analyzing data included use of Dictaphone recordings, stenographic and longhand notes, and transcribed recordings of certain programs.

The quantitative data obtained from children's written ratings were treated in order to find out which of the programs were enjoyed most and also the extent of general enjoyment of the series over the five-year period; furthermore, the trustworthiness of the ratings was examined.

Adult criteria were used in judging the quality of books from which adaptations were made.

The identification of characteristics that seemed to affect children's ratings was made possible through the analysis of certain programs rated extremely high or low over the five-year period. The extent to which these characteristics seemed to appear in certain programs was judged by the investigator. These judgments were compared with those of others believed to be competent in evaluating experiences for children.

Chapter III

TREATMENT OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

THE nature of the ratings obtained from the children's individual rating forms falls into three divisions:

- 1) Ratings obtained in the Horace Mann School during the last three years of the series 1941-1943, when two different ratings were made for each broadcast one rating at the end of the broadcast and the other at the end of the series
- 2) Ratings obtained in Horace Mann School during the first two years of the study, 1939-1940 and 1940-1941 series, when one rating was made at the end of the series
- 3) Ratings obtained from different groups of children in public, private, and parochial schools and also from especially selected teachers

The need for two ratings on each program became apparent during the 1941-1942 series. From the ratings at the end of the broadcast it was obvious that many of the programs had been rated either Excellent or Good. In order to find out whether or not these programs would stand the test of time, ratings were also made at the end of the entire series. The distribution of ratings obtained in the last three years of the study is shown in Table 2.

In Table 2 it is apparent that a relatively large number of these programs were rated either Excellent or Good even at the end of the series.

Two methods of scoring the ratings were used during the last three years. One method used the percentage of Excellent ratings. The other used the weighted average derived by giving an arbitrary weight of three to the Excellent ratings, two to the Good ratings, one to the Fair and zero to the Poor ratings. The total of these

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN'S RATINGS GIVEN TO BROADCASTS

Time of Rating	Total	Number of Ratings				Percent of Ratings	
		Excellent ^a	Good	Fair	Poor	Excellent	Good
1941-1942:							
End of Broadcast	395	169	118	65	43	287	43%
End of Series	395	146	115	63	71	261	66
1942-1943:							
End of Broadcast	395	278	91	16	10	369	93
End of Series	395	196	112	59	28	308	78
1943-1944:							
End of Broadcast	479	308	129	27	15	437	91
End of Series	479	190	166	80	43	356	74
All Three Years							
End of Broadcast	1,269	755	338	108	68	1,093	59
End of Series	1,269	532	393	202	142	925	42

^a Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it"
Good -- "enjoyed most of it"

Fair -- "enjoyed only parts of it"
Poor -- "enjoyed none of it."

scores was divided by the number of children and an average found. A popularity rank of each broadcast by each type of scoring was also obtained.

An indication of the correspondence between the ranks of programs when scored according to these two methods can be obtained by the rank-difference correlation procedure. The coefficients for the three years are .86, .99, and .98 for the ratings at the end of the program and .98, .98, and .97 at the end of the series. These coefficients are based on 22, 23, and 24 cases, respectively. Since these correlations indicate little difference in the results of the two types of ratings, the treatment of the data will be on the basis of the preferred percentage type of scoring.

The percentage ratings of each program of the last three years were treated in terms of:

1. The Excellent ratings, the purpose of which was to identify the programs, if any, that maintained high ranks in the two ratings, end-of-the-broadcast and end-of-the-series. The identification of particularly outstanding programs in terms of children's enjoyment was essential to the analysis of characteristics, which is the subject of Chapter IV.

2. The Excellent plus Good ratings, the purpose of which was to provide information on an important question raised in this study -- namely, were these broadcasts of book adaptations generally enjoyed over the three-year period? In other words, were they liked more than disliked over a *continuous period of time*?

The necessity for both types of treatments in terms of percentage ratings can be seen in the following example: Nineteen children rated the program *Augustus Goes South*; fifteen rated the program Excellent ("enjoyed all of it") and four rated it Good ("enjoyed most of it"). Nineteen children rated *Young Mac of Fort Vancouver*; four rated it Excellent and thirteen rated it Good, two rated it Fair, and none rated it Poor. The combined rating of Excellent plus Good in both programs indicates that the children enjoyed both programs; however, it is evident that *Augustus Goes South* was much more outstanding in

the children's enjoyment than *Young Mac of Fort Vancouver*.

Table 3 presents the ranks of the sixty-nine programs when scored in terms of the percentage of children who rated each program Excellent and also in terms of the percentage who rated each program Excellent or Good at the end of the broadcast and also at the end of the series. (See pages 30-32.)

The variation in response to the different programs is encouraging evidence that the children were actually discriminating in their ratings. Among the individual broadcasts in the 1941-1942 end-of-the-broadcast ratings, there were two programs at one extreme that were rated Excellent by 89 per cent of the children and two programs that were not rated Excellent by a single child. In the end-of-the-series ratings, the corresponding range was 0 to 84. In the 1942-1943 ratings, the range was from 0 to 100 per cent at the end-of-the-broadcast ratings and 0 to 100 per cent at the end-of-the-series ratings. In 1943, the variation was from 20 to 95 per cent at the end-of-the-broadcast ratings and from 6 to 89 per cent at the end-of-the-series ratings. Similar extremes were evident in the Excellent plus Good ratings. This variation is too great to be attributed to chance.

The data in Table 3 provide the basis for an answer to the question as to the extent to which the relative popularity of individual programs tends to remain constant when one set of ratings is compared with another. The rank difference correlation was used to measure the degree of correspondence between the percentage of children who rated each program Excellent at the end of the broadcast and at the end of the series. A similar correlation was made on the basis of Excellent plus Good ratings. The correlations based on percentage of Excellent ratings were .88, .70, and .64 for the three years. When Excellent and Good were combined, the corresponding correlations were .97, .64, .70, respectively.

These coefficients indicate that there are substantial shifts in the relative standing of some programs in the two sets of ratings when based on the percentage of

Excellent ratings. Therefore, a rating obtained at the end of the broadcast only does not seem sufficient to identify particularly outstanding programs. Reference to Table 3 shows a large number of ties in the ranks on which these correlations were based, particularly for the ranks from Excellent plus Good ratings.

The combined Excellent plus Good ratings obtained at the end of the broadcast account for 1,093 out of 1,269 or about 86 per cent of the children's ratings (see Table 2). At the end of the series they account for 925 out of 1,269 or about 73 per cent of the ratings. The fact that only about 14 per cent and 27 per cent of all the ratings were adverse does not necessarily indicate lack of discrimination on the part of the children. These high ratings also suggest that, especially during the last two years of this study, the Columbia Broadcasting System succeeded in producing in-school broadcasts which were, for the most part, enjoyed by the children. It is reasonable that a national network, recognized as outstanding in school broadcasts, should be able to produce a series of enjoyable programs of book adaptations.

The large proportion of high ratings for these programs means that the small number of least liked programs can readily be identified but that a corresponding group of best liked programs is not so apparent. A few programs at the bottom of the list are really extreme. The distinctions among the best liked are much smaller.

Obviously, more children marked a program Excellent when rating it immediately after the broadcast than when rating it later at the end of the series in comparison with other programs. The percentage of programs so rated is shown in the last line of Table 2. The difference between the percentage of programs rated Excellent on these two occasions (59 per cent and 42 per cent) and the difference between the percentage rated Excellent or Good (86 per cent and 73 per cent) is each too large to be attributed to chance. Chi-square computed for these two situations was, respectively, 79.2 and 68.2. Both values are far larger than could be expected in a random sample from a population in which the proportion of high

TABLE 3 (I)

POPULARITY RATINGS OF 22 PROGRAMS AS DETERMINED BY END-OF-BROADCAST
AND END-OF-SERIES RATINGS, 1941-1942 SERIES

Date	Title	Excellent ^a Ratings				Excellent + Good Ratings				Number of Children
		Percentage		Rank		Percentage		Rank		
		End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	
Oct. 9	Augustus Goes South	89%	84%	1½	1½	100%	100%	2½	2	19
Oct. 16	Susannah, a Little Girl with the Mounties									
Nov. 27	Blue Willow	89	84	1½	1½	100	100	2½	2	19
Jan. 8	Mr. Popper's Penguins	65	53	3	6	76	71	12½	13	17
Jan. 8	Mr. Popper's Penguins	63	63	4½	4	100	100	2½	2	19
Apr. 9	The Kid from Tomkinsville	63	47	4½	7½	89	84	6½	5½	19
Mar. 19	The Story of Captain DeKay	60	70	6	3	90	90	5	4	20
Mar. 5	The Fair American	58	42	7	10	100	83	2½	7½	19
Feb. 5	To and Again	56	61	8	5	83	83	9	7½	18
Feb. 19	Haym Solomon	53	37	9½	12	74	63	14	14½	19
Feb. 26	The Red Canoe	53	21	9½	15	89	84	6½	5½	19
Mar. 12	Seabird Island	47	41	11	11	76	76	12½	11	17
Dec. 4	The Story of San Martin	43	43	12	9	79	79	10	9½	14
Jan. 22	Early American	42	47	13	7½	84	79	8	9½	19
Oct. 30	The Boat Builder	37	16	14	16	58	63	16½	14½	19
Apr. 16	Oxmal, the Dwarf King	28	33	15	13	78	72	11	12	18
Dec. 11	American Ballads, Santa Fe, etc.	22	0	16	21	33	33	20	20	9
Nov. 6	One String Fiddle	21	0	17	21	32	11	21	21	19
Jan. 15	Ballads, Hiawatha, etc.	18	12	18	17	41	35	19	19	17
Oct. 23	Silver Fawn, The	16	26	19	14	58	53	16½	16	19
Nov. 13	The Gaucho's Daughter	6	6	20	18	67	38	15	18	18
Mar. 26	The Tin Maker Man	0	5	21½	19	47	42	18	17	19
Dec. 18	Gay Madelon	0	0	21½	21	21	0	22	22	19

^a Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it"

Good -- "enjoyed most of it"

POPULARITY RATINGS OF 23 PROGRAMS AS DETERMINED BY END-OF-BROADCAST
AND END-OF-SERIES RATINGS, 1942-1943 SERIES

Date	Title	Excellent ^a Ratings				Excellent + Good Ratings				Number of Children
		Percentage		Rank		Percentage		Rank		
		End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	
Feb. 4	The Citadel of 100 Stairways	100%	47%	1	12	100%	81%	8	14	15
Jan. 7	Captain Kidd's Cow	95	100	2½	1	100	100	8	3½	20
Feb. 25	Cinders	95	75	2½	5	100	95	8	7½	20
Jan. 21	The Blind Colt	94	83	4½	3	100	100	8	3½	18
Mar. 25	The Seven Simeons	94	59	4½	10	100	100	8	3½	17
Jan. 14	Arabian Nights	93	64	6	8	100	100	8	3½	14
Oct. 29	Young Hickory	92	42	7	13	100	83	8	12½	12
Dec. 17	The Poor Count's Christmas	90	75	8	5	100	95	8	7½	20
Apr. 15	The Ferryman	88	75	9½	5	100	100	8	3½	16
Jan. 28	We Couldn't Leave Dinah	88	29	9½	17½	100	65	8	18	17
Nov. 19	Flying Death	82	29	11	17½	100	71	8	16	17
Oct. 8	Augustus and the Mountains	79	89	12	2	100	100	8	3½	19
Oct. 22	Call It Courage	78	50	13	11	100	78	8	15	18
Feb. 11	The Matchlock Gun	75	63	14	9	94	94	17½	9½	16
Dec. 10	Lake of Gold	73	27	15	19	93	67	20	17	15
Nov. 12	The Stranger in Primrose Lane	71	65	16	7	94	94	17½	9½	17
Feb. 18	Lad with a Whistle	65	41	17	14	100	88	8	11	17
Dec. 3	Winabojo	56	25	18	20	94	44	17½	21	16
Mar. 11	North After Seals	44	39	19	15	94	43	17½	12½	18
Nov. 5	The Terrible Stranger	37	32	20	16	100	53	8	20	19
Mar. 4	The Jinx Ship	22	11	21	21	89	61	21½	19	18
Oct. 15	Young Mac of Fort Vancouver	21	5	22	22	89	42	21½	22	19
Mar. 18	Gulliver's Travels	0	0	23	23	0	0	23	23	17

^a Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it" Good -- "enjoyed most of it"

TABLE 3 (III)

POPULARITY RATINGS OF 24 PROGRAMS AS DETERMINED BY END-OF-BROADCAST
AND END-OF-SERIES RATINGS, 1943-1944 SERIES

Date	Title	Excellent ^a Ratings				Excellent + Good Ratings				Number of Children
		Percentage		Rank		Percentage		Rank		
		End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	
Oct. 28	The Fast Sooner Hound	95%	74%	1½	3	100	100	5½	1½	19
Nov. 18	Anything Can Happen on a River	95	26	1½	17½	100	74	5½	14	19
Apr. 27	Black Beauty	94	89	3	1	100	94	5½	4	18
Dec. 16	Nathaniel's Witch	90	30	4	15	100	70	5½	16	20
Feb. 10	The Great Guppy	86	73	6	4	95	86	13	9½	22
Oct. 14	All Aboard the Whale	86	71	6	4	100	95	5½	3	21
Nov. 4	Fox Island	96	32	6	14	95	82	13	12	22
Dec. 9	Shadow in the Pines	84	79	8	2	100	100	5½	1½	19
Apr. 13	The Story of Dr. Dolittle	73	55	9	6	95	83	13	9½	22
Mar. 23	Dougal's Wish	72	39	10½	11½	100	86	5½	11	18
Mar. 9	The Ship That Flew	72	39	10½	11½	94	89	16½	7½	18
Mar. 16	Knight of the Sea	67	44	12½	8	94	78	16½	13	18
Feb. 3	Haym Solomon	67	43	12½	9	90	71	19	15	21
Oct. 21	Bat	62	29	14	16	95	62	13	18	21
Mar. 30	The Water Babies	58	42	15	10	95	89	13	7½	19
Jan. 6	Jim Davis	55	14	16	21	91	67	18	17	22
Jan. 13	Francie on the Run	53	11	17	22	100	47	5½	21	19
Mar. 2	The Golden Fleece	50	50	18	7	100	90	5½	5½	20
Apr. 20	The Tall Hunter	43	17	19	20	78	52	21½	19½	23
Dec. 2	Cinder Ike	39	22	20	19	89	44	20	22	18
Jan. 20	Snow Treasure	35	35	21½	13	100	90	5½	5½	20
Feb. 17	Little Women	35	26	21½	17½	78	52	21½	19½	23
Jan. 27	Mountain Born	29	6	23	24	59	41	23	23	17
Feb. 24	How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick	20	10	23	23	35	35	24	24	20

^a Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it"

Good -- "enjoyed most of it"

atings was the same for end-of-the-broadcast and end-of-the-series ratings. However, chi-square takes no account of the relationship between two percentages for the same program, which has already been seen to be high. The question of whether programs are rated as high at the end of the series as at the end of the broadcast may be approached from the data of Table 3. Here it can be ascertained that out of sixty-nine broadcasts fifty-five received a larger proportion of Excellent ratings at the end of the broadcast and fourteen received either the same or a smaller proportion.

When Excellent and Good ratings are combined there are more ties, but forty-eight out of sixty-nine received a larger proportion of approved ratings immediately after the broadcast was heard while 21 per cent received either the same or a lower proportion. If it be assumed that for the population it is purely a matter of chance whether the after-program or after-series proportion of high ratings is larger, then the standard error of the observed percentages would be $\sqrt{\frac{(.50)(.50)}{69}} = .06$. An interval estimate for the observed percentage at the .99 confidence level would be from $.50 - .15 = .35$ to $.50 + .15 = .65$. Both of these observed proportions ($\frac{55}{69} = .80$ and $\frac{48}{69} = .70$) are well outside this range. It must be concluded that children are inclined to give higher ratings when these ratings are assigned immediately after hearing the program than when that program is considered along with others in the entire series.

Table 4 provides further information on the question of the effect of the lapse of time on the ratings made at the end of the series as compared to those made immediately after the broadcast was heard. A comparison of the cumulative ratings of the first half with those of the last half of each series in the two different ratings is presented.

The data of Table 4 suggest that recency is not the main factor in causing children to rate a program high. At the end of the series, 259 out of 634 (41 per cent) ratings of programs heard during the first half and 275

TABLE 4

BROADCAST RATINGS OF FIRST AND LAST HALVES OF THREE SERIES
BASED ON THE END-OF-PROGRAM AND THE END-OF-SERIES RATINGS

Year	Cumulative Total Ratings	Excellent ^a Ratings				Excellent + Good Ratings			
		End of Broadcast		End of Series		End of Broadcast		End of Series	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1941-1942:									
First Half	191	80	42	68	36	128	67	114	60
Last Half	204	89	44	78	38	159	78	147	72
1942-1943:									
First Half	206	147	71	106	51	201	98	159	77
Last Half	189	131	69	90	48	168	89	149	79
1943-1944:									
First Half	237	162	68	85	36	224	95	175	74
Last Half	242	146	60	105	43	213	88	181	75
Grand Total	1,269	775	60	532	42	1,093	86	925	73

^a Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it" Good -- "enjoyed most of it"

out of 635 (43 per cent) ratings of programs heard during the second half were Excellent. This difference in percentages is not significant. For ratings of Excellent plus Good the percentages are, respectively, 71 per cent and 75 per cent, but this difference is also not significant. However, it must be noted that when children rated programs immediately after the broadcast they seemed to like those appearing in the first half of the various series a little better than those appearing in the second half. The percentage of Excellent ratings made immediately after the broadcast were 61 per cent for programs in the first half of the series and 57 per cent for programs in the second half. Similar percentages obtained for the combination of Excellent and Good were 87 per cent and 85 per cent. The evidence is insufficient to justify the assertion that opinion becomes less favorable with the passage of time. However, it must be noted that in every one of the twelve comparisons (three years, two halves, two methods of rating) the percentage of high ratings is greater at the end of the broadcast than at the end of the series.

Since the correlations were somewhat low (.65 and .70) in the Excellent ratings in two of the three series, both ratings (end-of-broadcast and end-of-series) are necessary in identifying particularly outstanding programs.

The following twenty-five programs appear in the upper halves of their respective series on the basis of cumulative ratings at the end of the broadcast and at the end of the series. The dates on which they were heard are also listed, and indicate wide distribution of the various months during which the broadcasts were heard.

1941-1942:

Augustus Goes South	Oct. 9
Susannah, a Little Girl with the Mounties	Oct. 16
Blue Willow	Nov. 27
Mr. Popper's Penguins	Jan. 8
The Kid from Tomkinsville	Apr. 9
The Story of Captain DeKay	Mar. 19
Sea Bird Island	Mar. 12

Fair American	Mar. 5
To and Again	Feb. 5
1942-1943:	
Cinders	Feb. 25
Captain Kidd's Cow	Jan. 7
The Blind Colt	Jan. 21
Seven Simeons	Mar. 25
Arabian Nights	Jan. 14
The Poor Count's Christmas	Dec. 17
The Ferryman	Apr. 15
1943-1944:	
Fast Sooner Hound	Oct. 28
Black Beauty	Apr. 27
The Great Geppy	Feb. 10
All Aboard the Whale	Oct. 14
Shadow in the Pines	Dec. 9
The Story of Dr. Dolittle	Apr. 13
Dougal's Wish	Mar. 23
The Ship That Flew	Mar. 9
Knight of the Sea	Mar. 16

Programs that appear in the upper fourth of each series on the basis of cumulative ratings at the end of the broadcast and at the end of the series are as follows:

1941-1942:	
Augustus Goes South	Oct. 9
Susannah, a Little Girl with the Mounties	Oct. 16
Mr. Popper's Penguins	Jan. 8
The Story of Captain DeKay	Mar. 19
1942-1943:	
Cinders	Feb. 25
Captain Kidd's Cow	Jan. 7
The Blind Colt	Jan. 21
1943-1944:	
Fast Sooner Hound	Oct. 28
Black Beauty	Apr. 27
The Great Geppy	Feb. 10

The following programs appear in the lower halves of their series on the basis of cumulative ratings at the end of the broadcast and at the end of the series:

1941-1942:

The Boat Builder	Oct. 30
Oxmal, the Dwarf King	Apr. 16
American Ballads (Santa Fe Trail, etc.)	Dec. 11
One String Fiddle	Nov. 6
Ballads (Hiawatha, etc.)	Jan. 15
The Silver Fawn	Oct. 23
The Gaucho's Daughter	Nov. 13
Gay Madelon	Dec. 18
The Tin Maker Man	Mar. 26

1942-1943:

Flying Death	Nov. 19
Call It Courage	Oct. 22
Lake of Gold	Dec. 10
Lad with a Whistle	Feb. 15
Winabojo	Dec. 3
North After Seals	Mar. 11
The Terrible Stranger	Nov. 5
The Jinx Ship	Mar. 4
Young Mac of Fort Vancouver	Oct. 15
Gulliver's Travels	Mar. 18

1943-1944:

Bat	Oct. 21
Jim Davis	Jan. 6
Francie on the Run	Jan. 13
The Tall Hunter	Apr. 20
Cinder Ike	Dec. 2
Snow Treasure	Jan. 20
Little Women	Feb. 17
Mountain Born	Jan. 27
How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick	Feb. 24

Programs that appear in the lower fourth of each series on the basis of cumulative ratings at the end of the broadcast and at the end of the series are as follows:

1941-1942:

Ballads (Hiawatha, etc.)	Jan. 15
The Silver Fawn	Oct. 23
The Gaucho's Daughter	Nov. 13
Gay Madelon	Dec. 18
The Tin Maker Man	Mar. 26

1942-1943:

Gulliver's Travels	Mar. 18
Young Mac of Fort Vancouver	Oct. 15
The Jinx Ship	Mar. 4
The Terrible Stranger	Nov. 5
North After Seals	Mar. 11
Winabojo	Dec. 3

1943-1944:

The Tall Hunter	Apr. 20
Cinder Ike	Dec. 2
Snow Treasure	Jan. 20
Little Women	Feb. 17
Mountain Born	Jan. 27
How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick	Feb. 24

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS PERTAINING TO THE LAST THREE YEARS OF THE STUDY (1941-1943)

1. The variation among the ratings assigned to the various programs is great enough to indicate that children were not assigning their ratings by chance.

2. The correlation .64 between end-of-the-broadcast and end-of-the-series ratings was low enough to indicate the importance of having more than one rating by each child for each program.

3. The proportion of ratings which were either Excellent or Good was high, 73 per cent, 93 per cent, and 91 per cent for ratings at the end of the broadcast, and 66 per cent, 78 per cent, and 74 per cent for ratings at the end of the series in the three years covered by the study. If these percentages can be taken at face value they indicate a fairly high level of enjoyment of the programs presented.

4. Only a few of the programs received extremely low

ratings. There was one program which was not given approval by any of the children at the end of the broadcast. Two other programs were not given approval by a single child in either the end-of-the-broadcast rating or the end-of-the-series rating.

5. The percentage of high ratings was greater at the end of the broadcast than at the end of the series. This tendency for programs to receive a lower rating at the end of the series holds both for programs which came in the first half of the series and for those which came in the second half. The evidence does not indicate that a position at the end of the series is necessarily more conducive to a high rating than a position early in the series.

6. Certain programs have been identified as receiving widespread approval or widespread disapproval.

TREATMENT OF THE 1939-1940 AND 1940-1941 SERIES

The second division of the treatment of the data concerned the ratings obtained during the 1939-1940 and 1940-1941 series, during which time one rating of each program was obtained at the end of each series. Table 5 presents the ratings of the 1939-1940 series. The percentage of children who rated a broadcast One of the Top 3 Favorites or Very Good is listed in descending order. The number of children who rated a program Poor also appears. In the directions to children concerning this series, they were asked to list certain programs in order of preference. As indicated earlier (see pages 12-13) this phase proved too difficult; therefore, these data are not presented here.

In Table 5 it may be seen that two programs, *The White Stag* and *The Poor Count's Christmas*, were not given approval by any of the children who heard them; one program, *Sajo and the Beaver People*, is seventeen points higher than any other program of the series. It was generally enjoyed by 86 per cent of the listeners, and was the only program in the 1939-1940 series which was enjoyed by more than three fourths of the listeners. The 1939-1940 series was rated lower than any other of the five series of programs rated in the present study.

TABLE 5

FIFTH GRADE CHILDREN'S RATINGS OF TALES FROM FAR AND NEAR, 1939-1940,
END-OF-THE-SERIES RATINGS

Program	Number of Children	Number Rating Program		Percentage Rating Program		Rank	Number of Children Rating Program Poor
		One of Top 3 Favorites	or Very Good	One of Top 3 Favorites	or Very Good		
Sajo and the Beaver People ^a	14	12			86%	1	1
The Coconut Monkey ^a	13	9			69	2	-
The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood	16	10			63	3½	-
Sad Faced Boy	16	10			63	3½	-
The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins	15	9			60	5½	-
Children of the Dark People	10	6			60	5½	-
High Water ^a	14	7			60	5½	-
The Peddler's Cart	17	7			41	8	-
Caddie Woodlawn	13	5			38	9	-
Shawneen and the Gander	14	4			29	10	-
We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea	17	4			21	11	-
Hans Brinker	14	3			22	12	-
The Cream-colored Pony	11	3			18	13	1
Look See with Uncle Bill ^a	14	2			14	14	2
Wind in the Chimney	11	1			9	15	-
The Boy and His Parrot	11	1			9	16	1
The Golden Horseshoe	12	1			8	17	-
Mr. Bumps and His Monkey	15	1			7	18	1
One String Fiddle ^a	16	1			6	19	1
The Poor Count's Christmas	13	-			-	20	11
The White Stag ^a	13	-			-	21	10
All Programs	239	95			39%		

^a Heard by transcriptions.

^b Number of children who rated programs in "Order of Preference" classification is not included in Table 5, the purpose of which was to present extent of general enjoyment.

Five other programs received approval from more than half the children: *The Coconut Monkey*, 69 per cent; *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*; 63 per cent; *Sad Faced Boy*, 63 per cent; *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, 60 per cent; *Children of the Dark People*, 60 per cent.

Only one child expressed approval for *One String Fiddle*. This program was repeated in two of the following series, in which its ranks were 12½ and 21 respectively.

The White Stag and *The Poor Count's Christmas* fall at the bottom of the entire series: ten of the thirteen listeners rated *The White Stag* Poor; eleven of the thirteen listeners rated *The Poor Count's Christmas* Poor. No child rated either of these programs one of the Top 3 Favorites or among those rated Very Good. It must be noted that *The Poor Count's Christmas* was produced in a new show in the 1942-1943 series and was very well received.

Eight programs were heard by radio transcriptions. Thirteen programs were heard off the air during the regular Thursday morning program. Of the total 239 ratings obtained during 1939-1940, 39 per cent were classified either as One of Top 3 Favorites or Very Good. It must be remembered that these ratings were obtained at the end of the series.

The results of the treatment of the data concerning the 1940-1941 series of twenty-five broadcasts are presented in Table 6, in which the programs are arranged in their order of rank. The extent of the enjoyment of the series as a whole can be observed in the data.

Table 6 indicates wide variation in the children's ratings of the 1940-1941 series of *Tales from Far and Near*. Not a single child included *All Sails Set* among those programs Liked Best or Liked. *Mr. Poppins' Penguins*, *Aztec Drums*, *Traplines North*, and *The Great Geppy* were rated by every child either as Best One or Liked.

The percentage of all ratings of these programs which were either Best One or Liked was 64 per cent. Over half of these programs, however, were rated either Best One or Liked by three fourths or more of the children. These ratings based on the end-of-the-series ratings presumably indicate that the 1940-1941 broadcasts as a whole were enjoyed by these children who listened to the twenty-five programs.

TABLE 6

FIFTH GRADE CHILDREN'S RATINGS OF TALES FROM FAR AND NEAR, 1940-1941,
END-OF-THE-SERIES RATINGS

Program	Number of Children ^a	Number Rating Program		Percentage Rating Program		Rank	Number Rating Program Poorest in Series
		Best	One or Liked It	Best	One or Liked It		
Mr. Popper's Penguins	16	16		100%		2½	-
Aztec Drums	12	12		100		2½	-
Trampolines North	16	16		100		2½	-
The Great Geppy	17	17		100		2½	-
The Dauntless Liberator	17	15		88		6	-
Winter Bound	16	14		88		6	-
Smuggler's Sloop	16	14		88		6	-
Sad Faced Boy	17	14		82		8	-
The Red Dory	16	13		81		9	-
The Dark Star of Itza	14	11		79		10	-
The Emperor's Treasure Chest	13	10		77		11	-
All Over Town	16	12		75		12½	-
One String Fiddle	16	12		75		12	-
Drums in the Forest	15	11		73		14	1
The Wonderful Locomotive	17	12		71		15	-
The Scarlet Fringe	17	11		65		16½	-
Red Horse Hill	17	11		75		16½	-
American Ballads	16	7		44		18	1
Manga	14	6		43		19	-
Honk, the Moose	17	5		29		20½	-
Biography of a Grizzly	14	4		29		20½	1
Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm	15	3		20		22	-
Petite Suzanne	16	2		13		23	3
Meggy Macintosh	16	1		6		24	6
All Sails Set	15	-		-		25	6
Total Ratings	391		249				

^a Number of children who rated program Disliked is not included in frequencies of Table 6, the purpose of which was to present extent of general enjoyment and the programs rated Poorest by the children.

COMPARISON OF MAIN SUBJECTS, FIFTH GRADE CHILDREN IN THE HORACE MANN SCHOOL WITH OTHER GROUPS

The main purpose of the statistical analysis was to identify a group of broadcasts which was particularly liked or disliked by boys and girls of about ten years of age. A study of these two extreme groups of broadcasts, if such can be reliably determined, may shed light on the characteristics which are desirable. A few of the programs heard in this five-year series were also heard by children in other groups. It is important to know whether their judgments corroborate the main subjects' judgments reported in this chapter. The third division of the treatment of these data concerns, therefore, the comparison of certain ratings made by the fifth grade children who were among the main subjects in this study with ratings of other intermediate grade groups.

One of these comparisons consisted of the main subjects' ratings of eight broadcasts of the 1939-1940 series with the ratings of the same programs by children who participated in a preliminary study conducted by Seerley Reid. His findings were based on children's written ratings made at the end of the broadcast and again at the end of the semester.¹ Since the present study ratings of the 1940-1941 series were obtained at the end of the series, comparison will be based on end-of-the-semester's ratings in the Ohio preliminary study, which included ratings from California, Connecticut, Colorado, and Ohio. Fifteen groups of children were represented, nine of whom were in the intermediate grades. There was also a third grade and five seventh grades. Since the majority were intermediate grades, it seemed feasible to compare the ratings with those made by the fifth grade Horace Mann children who were the main subjects in the present study. The Horace Mann groups' ratings are arranged in two different rank orders, the first in terms of their rank based on eight programs, and the second on their rank based on all twenty-one programs of the 1939-1940 series.

A second comparison was made of twenty-five broadcasts' ratings of the 1940-1941 series by the Horace Mann fifth grade children; by a sixth grade in Horace Mann; and by

TABLE 7

COMPARISON OF EIGHT BROADCASTS' RATINGS MADE BY FIFTH GRADE HORACE MANN CHILDREN
WITH RATINGS OF CHILDREN IN THE OHIO PRELIMINARY STUDY

Program	Number Listening		Percentage of Children Rating Program a Favorite		Rank of Program	
	Horace Mann	Ohio	Ohio ^a	Horace Mann ^b	Ohio	Horace Mann ^c Horace Mann ^d
The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins	15	299	79%	33%	1	3 4
The Cream-colored Pony	11	371	50	0	2	6 13½
The Coconut Monkey	13	374	47	53	3	2 2
One String Fiddle	16	507	40	0	4	6 13½
Sajo and the Beaver People	14	331	21	64	5	1 1
Look See with Uncle Bill	14	243	15	0	6	6 13½
The Poor Count's Christmas	13	307	14	0	7	6 13½
The White Stag	13	466	12	0	8	6 13½

^a Rated at end of first semester as one of 3 Favorites among the eight programs.

^b Rated at end of series (second semester) as one of 3 Favorites or Very Good.

^c Rank based on eight programs.

^d Rank based on all twenty-one programs.

TABLE 8

TWENTY-FIVE BROADCASTS' RATINGS MADE BY FIFTH GRADE HORACE MANN CHILDREN, BY
SIXTH GRADE HORACE MANN CHILDREN, AND BY TEACHERS^a IN OHIO SECOND STUDY

Program	Percentage of Children Rating Program			Rank of Program		
	H.M. Grade 5	H.M. Grade 6	Teachers in Ohio Study	H.M. Grade 5 ^b	H.M. Grade 6	Ohio ^c
Mr. Popper's Penguins	100	100	94	2½	1½	2½
Aztec Drums	100	53	74	2½	20½	11
Traplins North	100	70	94	2½	14	2½
The Great Geppy	100	85	87	2½	8½	6½
The Dauntless Liberator	88	95	41	6	3½	20
Winterbound	88	74	53	6	11	16
Smuggler's Sloop	88	89	90	6	5	4
Sad Faced Boy	82	85	83	8	8½	10
The Red Dory	81	88	87	9	6½	6½
The Dark Star of Itza	79	60	32	10	16	23
The Emperor's Treasure Chest	77	88	87	11	6½	8
All Over Town	75	100	64	12½	1½	14
One String Fiddle	75	55	56	12½	19	13
Drums in the Forest	73	72	41	14	12½	18½
The Wonderful Locomotive	71	95	85	15	3½	9
The Scarlet Fringe	65	53	33	16½	20½	22
Red Horse Hill	65	61	100	16½	15	1
American Ballads	44	24	41	18	24½	18½
Manga	43	56	69	19	17½	12
Honk, the Moose	29	72	88	20½	12½	5
Biography of a Grizzly	28	84	56	20½	10	15
Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm	20	24	49	22	24½	17
Petite Suzanne	13	29	22	23	23	24
Meggy MacIntosh	6	41	9	24	22	25
All Sails Set	0	56	35	25	17½	21

^a Average number of teachers reporting on each program = 44.

^b Rated at end-of-the-series as Liked or Best One in Grade 5 and Grade 6.

^c Rated at end-of-the-broadcast as enjoyed Very Much.

TABLE 9

HORACE MANN FIFTH GRADE RATINGS OF FIVE BROADCASTS COMPARED WITH PUBLIC AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOL GROUPS

School	Grade	Broadcast	Date	End-of-Broadcast Ratings					Percentage Excellent + Good
				Number of Listeners	Ex ^a	G	F	P	
Horace Mann	5	Augustus and the Mountains	1942- 1943	19	15	4	0	0	79%
Corpus Christi	4 ¹	"		27	27	0	0	0	100
Corpus Christi	4 ²	"		25	25	0	0	0	100
Corpus Christi	5(2)	"		61	47	13	1	0	67
Horace Mann	5	Capt. Kidd's Cow		20	19	1	0	0	95
Corpus Christi	5(2)	"		61	55	6	0	0	90
P.S. 42, New York	4B ³	"		35	33	1	1	0	94
P.S. 42,	5B ⁴	"		32	30	2	0	0	94
P.S. 42,	5B ^{4&3}	"		95	90	5	0	0	95
P.S. 42,	5A ³	"		36	35	1	0	0	97
P.S. 42,	6(2)	"		73	57	16	0	0	78
Horace Mann	5	Arabian Nights		14	13	1	0	0	93
P.S. 42	6(2)	"		81	78	3	0	0	96
Horace Mann	5	North After Seals		18	8	9	1	0	44
New Haven	6	"		47	12	35	0	0	26
Horace Mann	5	We Couldn't Leave Dinah		17	15	2	0	0	88
New Haven	5	"		50	36	11	0	0	72
Total Listeners				712	595				

^a Ex -- "enjoyed all of it"
G -- "enjoyed most it"

F -- "enjoyed only parts of it"
P -- "enjoyed none of it."

the teachers' judgments in a second study by Reid.² The two Horace Mann groups' ratings are based on the end-of-the-series ratings in which the programs Like Best or Liked were combined into one rating showing the extent of general enjoyment. The teachers' judgments were made at the end-of-the-broadcast ratings on the basis of enjoyed Very Much.

It was also possible to compare the main subjects' ratings of five broadcasts with the ratings made by intermediate grade children in Public School 42, New York City; Corpus Christi School, New York City; and children in the Practice School of New Haven, Connecticut. (See Tables 7, 8, and 9.)

In the comparison of broadcast ratings made by the main subjects and those of other intermediate grade groups, certain broadcasts maintained relatively high ratings. These broadcasts are as follows: *Augustus and the Mountains*, *Captain Kidd's Cow*, *Arabian Nights*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, *Traplines North*, *the Great Geppy*, *The Smuggler's Sloop*, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, and *The Coconut Monkey*.

Programs that received relatively low ratings in the comparisons were: *The White Stag*, *The Poor Count's Christmas* (the 1939 production), *All Sails Set*, *Meggy MacIntosh*, *Petite Suzanne*, and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*.

Although the ratings from the comparative groups were obtained under different environmental conditions, it is evident that certain programs were enjoyed and others disliked by nearly all the children.

The identification of certain broadcasts that were rated either extremely high or extremely low over the five-year period aided in the analysis of characteristics affecting children's ratings. This analysis is the subject of Chapter IV.

Chapter IV

CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHILDREN'S APPRAISALS OF BROADCASTS

FROM the analysis of children's ratings and oral reactions to the broadcasts studied, certain characteristics emerged. The effect of these characteristics on the success or failure of certain programs is influenced by the script, the production techniques, or a combination of both. The script contains the plot, the development of which affects such major characteristics as *suspense*, *entertainment*, *humor*, as well as *social concepts*, and *subject matter* of a program. The script also determines the *scenes to be selected for adaptation*, the *number of scenes* in a program, and the *number of characters* in a scene. The script influences in large measure the *vocabulary* of a program, including the presence of *new words and phrases*, *accent and dialect*, *slang and grammatical errors*. The extent of *narration and dialogue scenes*, including *crowd scenes*, and the utilization of *music and transitions* must also be planned for in the script.

Production techniques contribute in some measure to the development of each characteristic named above and are primarily responsible for certain others, such as *clarity of voice*, *genuineness of portrayal of character through voice*, *voice contrasts for the identification of characters*, and *genuineness of accent and dialect*. Production techniques influence to a large extent the nature and subordination of *sound effects*, *timing of transition* and the unique contribution of *music* which sometimes conveyed the meaning of the plot better than words. More often, however, music was a means of building the mood of changing scenes.

The effect of the above-mentioned characteristics on the children's appraisals of broadcasts is the major concern of this chapter. The importance of the selection of books for adaptation is also included.

SUSPENSE

Suspense in children's radio programs might be described as that state of wonderment, uncertainty, and sustained interest which children experience concerning the outcome of incidents within a broadcast. Conflict, strife, struggle, and encounter create suspense. The absence of these elements in a plot contribute to a program's failure. In a thirty-minute broadcast based on a book, there is danger of allowing too little time in the script for developing suspense. Lack of suspense may be evident in the structure of the written script, or in the timing of the broadcast on the air, or in a combination of both, as indicated in the program *Mountain Born*, rated among the lowest of an entire series. The program was heard in January but was not discussed until the end of the entire series of broadcasts in May. Oral reactions obtained on Dictaphone recordings concerning *Mountain Born* revealed the children's vivid impressions regarding the effect of plot and timing in a program. "Slow moving, same thing over and over again, got his sheep to the mountains [the baby sheep], and the same thing happened to the baby sheep. . . . Terrible plot, repeated itself too much. . . . Boy had the sheep and every year he took the wool. . . . The lady made a coat for him--no suspense. . . . Same thing happened with the old lady's daughter, always gave the woman wool for the laughter. . . . The story doesn't develop into anything, not a real plot, just a lot of incidents--sheep, coat, snowstorm, little sheep--not connected." (See pages 63-65.)

In the children's written ratings at the end of the series, *Mountain Born* retained the same rank as it had in the written ratings at the end of the broadcast. Its rank was 23 in a series of twenty-three broadcasts. Its percentage of Excellent ratings by the children at the

end of the broadcast was 34 in a series which had an average of 64 per cent. Its percentage of Excellent ratings at the end of the series was 6 in a series that had an average of 40 per cent.

The program *One String Fiddle* was rated low by two different groups. Again the plot and timing seemed to provide no suspense, and the listeners' comments indicated the children's awareness of that lack. "The trouble was with the story, not the broadcast. . . . Tiresome at the beginning. . . . Too much of the same thing at the beginning. . . . Dragged out part where he was playing the fiddle. . . . They put in too many places where he got ideas for his music and they weren't all heard in the finished tune. . . . Not a good story, the plot was too easy. Maybe if they had not shown the collar, it would not have been so easy to figure out."

In contrast to the children's comments concerning *Mountain Born* and *One String Fiddle*, their praise of certain programs rated high gives evidence of the importance to them of plot and timing in creating suspense. "*Robin Hood* was a good story, exciting, things were always happening. . . . In *Sad Faced Boy* I couldn't see through the plot." *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* was also recognized as a program that had "a good plot." In *The Coconut Monkey* "the plot was good and it was done especially well. I mean you could tell what was happening. . . . The storm scene was especially exciting and I couldn't guess the plot."

A plot that stimulates the imagination need not necessarily be one within the experience of children. Although the locale of *The Coconut Monkey* was unfamiliar to many of the children, it was thoroughly enjoyed. The children reactions reveal that this program succeeded in stimulating the imagination. "In the end there was a little bit of mystery. That helps a lot. It keeps you thinking. . . . This is a most adventurous story. I feel I have been listening for two hours, like a movie. By using my imagination I can see him [the monkey] swinging his tail from tree to tree in a way that monkeys do until he came to where the magician lived."

Further evidence of a program's effect on the imagination is observed in a child's comment concerning the program *The Great Geppy*. "And when Geppy was shot from the cannon, I thought they could have said, 'Here comes Geppy, the famous horse, who is being shot from a cannon,' or something like that. I expected *really* that Geppy wouldn't fit in the cannon."

Concerning the acceptability of vicarious experience in children's programs, Reid states:

In a series of children's story broadcasts, it would be foolish to insist or even expect that the stories should be based upon experiences actually familiar to listeners. To do so would be to deny one of the functions of literature. Although few of the twenty-five broadcasts were directly related to the experiences of listeners, most of them were within the *easily* imagined experiences of youngsters. Imaginatively they waited for the wolf (Traplines North) or returned to the empty city (Aztec Drums) or watched the repair man bore holes in a refrigerator (Mr. Popper's Penguins) or caught the lobster thief (The Red Dory) or rode the train to San Francisco (The Wonderful Locomotive).¹

Although it is obvious that suspense and challenge to the imagination must be accompanied by understanding, there is a surprising lack of comprehension on the part of the children in certain programs analyzed in this study. It is necessary to identify, if possible, reasons for this lack of understanding. The program *Petite Suzanne* (1940-1941), *Gulliver's Travels* (1942-1943), and the first production of *The Poor Count's Christmas* (1939-1940), were three notable failures, so far as the children's enjoyment of them was concerned. Each appears among the lowest in rank in their respective series. The genuine French accent and the French rhythm pattern of two of the main characters in *Petite Suzanne* could be heard, but it could not be understood, consequently the program as a whole was a failure.

In *Gulliver's Travels*, the filtered voices of the Lilliputians could not even be heard, consequently

comprehension was impossible. The fact that Gulliver's voice, in the same scene with the Lilliputians, could be understood centered the cause quite definitely on the misuse of the filtered microphone rather than reception. Similarly, in the 1939 production of *The Poor Count's Christmas*, the filtered voice of the fairy was not clearly heard in the same scene with the giant whose voice was clear at all times. The 1942-1943 production of *The Poor Count's Christmas*, with the improved use of a filtered microphone, was entirely successful. Not to understand the French accent of a main character or to be unable to hear the filtered voices of main characters are quite different reasons for incomprehension than the too rapid shift of scenes or the complexity of content in a program. It is necessary to differentiate between various reasons for children's lack of comprehension of radio programs.

The fact that certain parts of the content were obscure need not doom a program to failure. *The Great Geppy*, rated among the highest, contains content that seemed difficult for some children to understand. The fact that a child could identify the sections not understood and asked for an explanation of them indicates that inattention was not the cause of the lack of comprehension. It must be noted, furthermore, that the children discussing *The Great Geppy* were in an environment especially adapted to good listening (see pages 8-9). They represented children of average or above average background and intelligence. It is necessary, therefore, to scrutinize just what it is that caused lack of comprehension in such a popular program as *The Great Geppy*.

The following excerpt was recorded on Dictaphone² recordings and reveals children's discussion concerning this problem of lack of understanding of part of the program *The Great Geppy*.

John: I think it was fairly good, but the swimmers and the foreign language people sounded like ducks and geese or something, and I thought that was sort of odd. Maybe I'm mistaken but I don't get the point to

have it all foreign people and all, and then the swimmers and all and then I didn't like the very end where that--well, it seemed sort of dumb. He [the announcer] says he thinks it's marvelous the way Geppy solves it, and I didn't think he was so good because it seems sort of dumb. I understand the way he said was that he saw Jimmy taking these things out of the safe. Jimmy took them out, and didn't put any in.

[Children in a chorus try to explain to John]

Teacher: Who can explain that part to John because he didn't understand it and hasn't read the book? Lorraine, will you explain that part to him?

Lorraine: Well, I think it's because they told--when Geppy was writing the last letter, he said that Jimmy had given tickets free to a lot of children and that's why there was such a big crowd and so little money, because he gave many away free, and he'd been putting in some money which he'd had out (I don't know how he got that) because he's certain that there wouldn't be enough money for the circus to move to the next town.

John: Yeah, I understand that part but then when Guppy was in looking....

Teacher: His name is Geppy.

John: Geppy was in sort of spying on Jimmy when he was going to the safe; well, he made it sound as if Jimmy was taking something out.

Lorraine: Jimmy was putting something in. He was putting in....

John: Yes, but what he said--he said now he's taking something out, and he's waiting for the lock to click or something, and then he took something out and then a little while later he said he put it in.

Teacher: Jack, can you explain that part of the broadcast?

Jack: No, I can't.

Teacher: Bobby?

Bobby: He *thought* that. He *thought* that he was putting them in and then later he saw that he wasn't.

John: He was putting them in. How did he find out? That was sort of a dumb case.

Teacher: John, will you take a look at the book and in book there is a little difference there from the adaptation. You'll find a few pages describing Jimmy in the tent, getting at the safe. I wish you'd read those and tell us about them. There were some other points.

Jack: Well, I didn't understand the sea horse business. Somebody's putting some sort of a panel and his mane and he has to eat something. I didn't understand it.

Teacher: Who can explain that part for Jack? Elaine?

Elaine: Well, it was in the freak house and Geppy wanted to, well, investigate the people in the circus, and so they put up this panel and they put him behind it so that they only showed his head and his tail. . . .

Teacher: His head and his neck. Excuse me.

Elaine: His neck? Oh yes. Well, and then the part about this eating--they fed him hay and they said that it was tropical seaweed and then--what I was going to say was that I think it would make a very good movie short.

Teacher: Can you imagine this in a Walt Disney movie?

Children: [Murmurs of delight]

Teacher: Dick?

Dick: Oh, I didn't understand about the first and last part--where all the pressing of buttons and all the different actors or something come in. Were they all horses or men or what?

Teacher: Will you explain that, Alice?

Alice: Well, there were certain detectives that they sent around to the circus if anything happened--if anything was stolen.

Teacher: That isn't his question.

Alice: But they weren't all horses.

Teacher: What was the scene there at the beginning? Why all the pressing of buttons and the swimmers and the music?

Alice: Well, because this man who was at the circus sent for this detective that could be shot out of a cannon. . . .

Teacher: And where did this detective come from? Joan?

Joan: He came from . . .

Teacher: From a company, an agency, and that's where

these other detectives worked. Why did they have a lot of different detectives at this agency, Lorraine?

Lorraine: Well, to fit the different needs. Maybe something is wrong with the trapeze and they want to get something like that in some circus--a trapeze detective or something like that.

Teacher: They have special detectives to fit special cases.

Dick: But still what's that got to do with pushing buttons?

Teacher: Excuse me. Elaine, can you tell us?

Elaine: They push the buttons to summon the different kinds of detectives.

John: They push the button and all that--the Japanese start talking and . . .

Elaine: You see, they pushed the foreign language detective button and then all these foreign language agents--detectives--started jabbering in their different languages.

Teacher: Dick?

Dick: Well, I was going to ask what the name of the story was.

Child: *The Great Geppy*.

Teacher: Joe?

Joe: Well, I didn't get the part where they said something was fake. I thought I heard somebody yell out "Fake!"

Teacher: Who can explain that part clearly to him? Dick?

Dick: Well, there was one man in the circus when they were showing him [Geppy] as a sea horse. The man said that the stripes were fake and that they had been painted on.

Teacher: Do you understand now, Joe?

Joe. Yes.

Teacher: Norma?

Norma: Well, that's what made it funny about that fake business was he said that the seaweed was real and the sea horse was real but the stripes were painted on him. That was the only thing that was real. The other things weren't real.

Teacher: Did you get the sense of humor in it? Norma see something that you didn't see. The man was looking on and thought he was so sure that he could tell a fake from the real thing, he missed the only *real* thing in it. Norma?

Norma: Well, he saw this supposed-to-be seahorse and said "Oh, the sea horse was very real and the seaweed is definitely real but anyone can tell that the stripes weren't real--they were just painted on."

Teacher: And were they real?

Children: Yes!

This discussion of *The Great Geppy*, which took place immediately after the program was heard, reveals parts of the broadcast that were not clear to some of the children. The written ratings of the entire group, however, indicate that these instances were not numerous enough to affect the success of the program *as a whole*. The humor which permeated this program (see pages 68-69) was such that the weaknesses of other characteristics seem to have been overlooked. Some of these weaknesses are discussed under their respective headings in this study.

Concerning the problem of clarity of broadcasts, Reid's study reports four programs out of twenty-five "in which events and scenes were crowded together so that listener had trouble in tracing the plot and in following the transitions from scene to scene."³

Other causes for lack of understanding which relate to the content of the program are illustrated in Reid's statement: "Obviously, students did not experience, even vicariously, those scenes and actions which they did not understand--e.g., the rescue from the fire (*All Over Town*), the escape from the Caribs (*The Smuggler's Sloop*) or the sacrifice (*Dark Star of Itza*)."⁴

Comprehension of a program is an important factor, but it is not important enough to maintain interest if suspense is lacking. An initial scene that creates a conflict captures the attention of the listener and helps to hold his attention throughout the program. Evidence of the success and failure of initial scenes to establish suspense is observed in *Fast Sooner Hound* and in *Mountai*

orn respectively. These two programs maintained extremes in rank at the end-of-the-broadcast and also at the end-of-the-series ratings. *Fast Sooner Hound* received a rating of Excellent from 95 per cent of the children at the end of the broadcast and from 74 per cent at the end of the series, and ranked 1.5 and 3 in the two respective ratings. The corresponding percentages and ranks for *Mountain Born* were 29 per cent, 6 per cent, and ranks 23 and 24, respectively.

The presence of suspense in the initial scene of *Fast Sooner Hound*⁵ is in contrast to its absence in the initial scene of *Mountain Born*,⁶ as evidenced in the following excerpts from these two programs.

Fast Sooner Hound

[Sound of train rushing across countryside--off. Whistling in distance. It fades, and dies out under announcer.]

anncr: [On cue] A railroad man was walking down the street with his hands in his overall pockets, and a long-legged lop-eared hound trotted beside him. The man was smoking a pipe. After a while he stopped walking, took the pipe out of his mouth and turned to the hound. "Well, Sooner," he said, "here's the place." They had come to a small building near the railroad tracks. Over the front door was a sign which said: Roadmaster. The dog called Sooner didn't seem to pay much attention to the man's words. But after the man had knocked and opened the door, the hound followed him inside.

[Knocking on door. It opens. Steps on wood. Bark or two from dog.]

R[oadmaster]: [On cue] Well? Who are you? What do you want?

Boomer: Mister, I'm looking for the roadmaster.

R: I'm the roadmaster.

Boomer: I'm a Boomer fireman. And I'm looking for a job.

R: So you're a Boomer. Well, I know what that means. You go from one railroad to another.

Boomer: That's right. Last year I shovelled coal on the

Katy. Before that I worked on the Frisco line. Before that it was the Wabash. I travel light, I travel far, and I don't let any grass grow under my feet.

R: We might be able to use you on one of our trains. Have you got some place you can leave the dog?
[Bark of protest]

Boomer: Hey . . . quiet, Sooner. Quiet. Listen here Mr. Roadmaster, leave my dog? That Sooner always goes along with me.

R: He does, eh? And why do you call him Sooner?

Boomer: He'd sooner run than eat. That's why. He'd sooner run than eat. I raised him from a pup, and he ain't ever spent a night or a day or even an hour away from me. He'd cry fit to break his heart if we weren't together.

[Dog in mournful wail]

Boomer: [On cue] See? He knows what we're talking about. Why, if he couldn't stay with me, he'd cry so loud you couldn't hear yourself think.

R: I don't see how I can give you a job with the hound. . . .

[Dog barks in protest]

Boomer: Shut up, Sooner . . . you stay quiet. I'll fix this.

R: It's against the rules of the railroad to allow a passenger in the cab. Makes no difference if it's man or beast, nobody is allowed to ride with the fireman and the engineer in the cab, and no passenger is allowed in the caboose. That's Rule Number One on this road. And it's never been broken yet. And what's more, it never will be broken as long as I'm Roadmaster. So it looks as if that Sooner is going to spoil things for you.

Boomer: Why, he ain't no trouble. He don't have to ride in the cab. He just runs alongside the train.

R: He what?

Boomer: I said he just runs alongside the train. When I'm on a freight train, he chases around a little in the fields to pass the time away. Sometimes he

scares up a rabbit--just to play with when things get dull. But he ain't no trouble to nobody. And he never rides in the cab or the caboose.

t: You mean that old, hungry-looking hound can outrun a freight train? [Laughs] You can't make me believe that.

Boomer: Shucks . . . he'll do it without half trying, won't you, Sooner?

[Dog barks in agreement]

Boomer: Matter of fact, it will be a little bit tiresome on him having to travel so slow. But that Sooner will put up with anything just to stay close by me. He loves me that much.

t: Oh, come now. The dog isn't born that can outrun one of our freight trains. We run the fastest freighters from coast to coast. That's why we get so much business. I'm sorry we can't give you a job. You look like a man that could keep a boiler popping off on an uphill grade, but I just don't see how we can work it with the hound.

Boomer: Listen. I'll lay my first pay check against a dollar bill that my Sooner will run circles around your freight train. What's more, he'll be fresh as a daisy when we pull into the junction, and his tongue won't even be hanging out. Of course, he'll want to trot around the station about a hundred times before we start--just to limber up, you know.

t: It's a bet. And you can have the job. I'm not a mean man, you know, but Rule One has got to stick.

Mountain Born

nnrcr: Today's story, *Mountain Born*, by Elizabeth Yates, takes us to sheep country--the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

Sound: [Strong March wind]

nnrcr: It was a wild March day, and the sky was full of tattered clouds, like a flock of heavy-wooled

sheep. The wind was at their heels every moment. The wind was everywhere--banging doors in the house, flapping clothes on the line, whirling dried leaves into the air, searching out winter in all its hiding places and preparing the way for spring [Fade in sound of sheep ba-a-ing.] But not all the gustiness of the wind could rise louder than the bleatings of sheep in the barn--sounds, deep and tender, sounds high and imperative. This was the ewing season--and the farmer, Andrew, and his helper, Benj, were busy in the barn helping the little lambs into the world.

Sound: [Sheep register]

Andrew: There, there, Sarah old girl, everything's all right now--and look at the fine ewe lamb you got. Benj, how is that little black twin?

Benj: Still no sign of life in her, Andrew.

Andrew: I'm afraid we've lost her. We'll take her along to the house and put her in the lambing box, while we git some lunch.

Sound: [Men's footsteps . . . sound of sheep gradually fades]

Andrew: Peter should be back from the pasture by now.

Benj: Children have no sense of time--until their stomachs are empty. He'll be along soon, if he's as hungry as I am.

Sound: [Door opens . . . closes . . . sound of sheep out . . . footsteps on wood]

Martha: [Off slightly] [Sees lamb] Oh Andrew! The lamb!

Andrew: It's the first we've lost, Martha. One of twins, and the mother is busy with the other. Thirty-four fine new lambs, and now this little one--dead. Put it in the lambing box, Benj. I'll tend to it later, the hide is worth saving.

Martha: And are there many more to come?

Andrew: No, not more than three or four.

Martha: Wait, Benj, maybe there's a spark of life in it yet. Maybe we can coax it back to life. Here, no wrap the lamb in this hot wet towel, and I'll ge some warm milk to pour down its throat.

Andrew: It's quite lifeless, Martha.

Benj: We do not know as much as God, Andrew. I'll try blowing in its nostrils. [Pause] Mis' Higgins, some more steaming hot towels, and then some warm dry ones. It's a good sturdy ewe lamb, Andrew.

Andrew: It is that.

Martha: [After pause] All right, Benj, I'll take her now. You two eat your lunch, and get back to the barn. For I know you've work to do, keeping forty lambs feeding regularly.

Sound: [Spoons and plates]

Andrew: [Slightly off] Martha, you rock that lamb in your arms as you rocked Peter years ago.

Peter: [Off] Mother--Mother! [Door opens] Is my lunch-- [Door closes] [Quietly] Oh, there's a lamb asleep. I mustn't wake it, must I? The lamb is asleep, isn't it?

Martha: Yes, Peter. It's asleep, but it will wake soon. Now you go eat your lunch.

Andrew: [Slightly off] Did you get all the calves in the pasture, son?

Peter: Yes, father. And I checked the fence, and there are no holes in it.

Andrew: That's good.

Martha: Andrew, Benj, look! The lamb is breathing-- [Pause] and it's sucking the milk out of my palm.

Father: Yes, you'll have to mother the lamb till it can eat hay and grain with the others.

Peter: It's awake now.

The unification of suspense around a central theme, as well as its presence in an initial scene of a program, appears in certain programs rated highest. In *Black Beauty* and *The Blind Colt* the struggle for existence permeates the entire program. In *Fast Sooner Hound*, suspense, at all times, centers around the major goal--that of keeping the dog and his master together. In *The Great Geppy* the struggles of this unusual horse to become a successful detective are evident throughout the program. In *Mr. Popper's Penguins* the numerous problems encountered by the sudden presence of penguins are all overcome

in order that Mr. Popper's main goal of earning his living and providing for his menagerie can be accomplished. The boys in *Captain Kidd's Cow* experience numerous hair-raising difficulties including their encounter with cattle rustlers and a girl stowaway. These incidents are at all times subordinated to the main theme of navigating the boat "The Jolly Roger" to the mouth of the Mississippi.

The way in which the suspense of each scene contributes to the suspense of the main theme is illustrated in the following notes of scenes in the highly rated program *The Blind Colt* which was the thirteenth broadcast on the 1942-1943 series. It was rated Excellent at the end of the program by 94 per cent of the listeners. Its rank order was 3. After hearing the remaining twelve broadcasts of the series, the children again rated *The Blind Colt*. In this second rating the broadcast was rated Excellent by 83 per cent of the listeners and its rank order continued to be 3.

The Blind Colt

Scene 1: Description of newborn colt; his struggle to walk; his sense of smell, which is his weapon against danger; sound of horses' hoofs, mother senses danger, stands ready to protect her young.

Scene 2: Uncle Torwal and boy find colt, discover it is blind; discuss shooting it; boy protests; mare fights off both of them; uncle decides not to kill colt; they leave; mare and colt go off with other horses.

Scene 3: Description of life on range; blind colt's struggle for existence; boy sees colt occasionally; sounds and smells around the blind colt help in his struggle to exist.

Scene 4: Description of summer; colt senses a strange smell and sound; struggle with rattlesnake; is bitten by rattlesnake; finally gets away and continues his struggle to live on the range.

Scene 5: End of summer description; herd of horses are endangered by wolves; wolves attack horses; mare and colt are blocked by five wolves; they run into a canyon which

is a trap; mare crowds colt into angle of canyon and mare whirls at wolves; wolves try to bite at tendons in mare's haunches; wolf trap set in canyon not seen by wolves; little by little trash is knocked out of trap during fight; wolf pup gets caught in it; other wolves run to trap; mare and colt dash out the only entrance and back to mustang band.

Scene 6: Colt's preparation for his struggle through winter; success of the summer.

Scene 7: Boy asks uncle about colt; wants him to bring it to ranch; uncle says he should have shot colt; uncle tells boy about seeing colt.

Scene 8: Blind colt gets lost in blizzard; shoved off path by other horses; follows smell of horses to warm shed; bitten and driven out; finally let alone and stays in shed until the boy finds him; the boy trains him secretly.

Scene 9: Boy's uncle asks him about colt; says he must put him back on range; boy surprises uncle with colt's stunts; finally uncle lets boy keep the blind colt.

In contrast to the unified plot of *The Blind Colt*, in which suspense is centered around a main theme, *Mountain Born* not only lacks suspense within certain scenes, as indicated in the initial one, but there is no evidence of a unifying element in the program. In the following notes of the various scenes there seems to be an emphasis on subject matter pertaining to life on a sheep ranch rather than on the telling of a good story.

Mountain Born

Scene 1: Men on sheep ranch discuss newborn lamb; thinking it is nearly dead, they take it to lambing box on their way to lunch; men tell Martha about lamb; she takes it in her arms, rocks it; Peter enters. Suddenly lamb breathes; sucks milk out of her hand; Peter holds the lamb; is told he can have it.

Scene 2: Peter helps cut off the lambs' tails; father explains why it must be done and that it will not hurt much; Peter holds his pet lamb while father uses red hot locking iron to burn off lamb's tail.

Scene 3: Peter and Benj in the pasture; they eat their lunch.

Scene 4: Peter helps at sheep shearing time by packing down wool; tells about dipping the sheep after shearing time.

Scene 5: Peter out among sheep with a man who tells him story of David looking for lion that had lamb in his mouth; Peter decides to leave his pet in mountains with other sheep.

Scene 6: Peter visits pasture at end of summer; whistles for his lamb; finds her easily.

Scene 7: Peter arranges to have lady make him a new coat. Narrator tells about Peter wearing his coat for five years. Peter tears coat on fence and goes home to his mother.

Scene 8: Peter brings coat to mother, who tells him she will mend it before men come to supper; during supper dog barks; door is opened, and Peter's pet lamb has come down from the pasture. Lamb has been attacked by wolves; Peter and men go off to kill wolf.

Scene 9: Peter and men in pasture waiting for wolf; father kills wolf at first shot; he tells Peter it is necessary to kill sometimes in order to save other lives.

Scene 10: Peter and hired man tend sheep in pasture. The twenty-third psalm is recited as they bring the sheep home.

Scene 11: Peter counting sheep as they go through pasture gate; finds wolf and cubs; hired man says he will kill them. Peter takes flock home.

Scene 12: Shearing time again. Biddy, the sheep, is getting old. Mary comes to help with the sheep; stays for supper.

Scene 13. Peter goes to the lady who makes his coat. There is not enough wool to pay for a coat, so it is decided that Peter will pay for the rest of the bill next year with wool from his pet lamb.

Scene 14: Peter finds his pet lamb, Biddy, has been out in the snow; Peter goes to look for his pet's baby lamb, and while he is gone, his pet dies.

Scene 15: Peter returns with the baby lamb; takes it to

Biddy, his pet; finds Biddy dead; Peter decides to raise baby lamb as he had raised Biddy, his pet.

Nowhere in this entire five-year study of children's reactions to radio programs is there a better expression of the lack of suspense in a program than in the remark of a child concerning *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*. "Nothing happened to her. She wanted to sell soap. She went out to sell soap. She sold soap. Period. In the book she really had a hard time selling that soap."

Summary.--Suspense is one of the major characteristics affecting children's ratings of certain radio programs based on books. The selection of scenes from a book and their condensation into a thirty-minute program, while at the same time preserving suspense, is a major problem in the adaptation of books for children's radio programs. The problem is made more difficult by the fact that the writer must be aware of the listener's maturity level which limits content and production techniques.

The plot of a program which depends for its strength on the proper selection and adaptation of scenes from a book is the basis of a good script. The general timing of the plot influences, in large measure, the extent to which suspense will be developed.

Certain programs, as a whole, were not understood, simply because the accent of a speaker or a filtered voice was not clear. Both could be *heard*, but they could not be *understood*; consequently, the programs were failures so far as children's enjoyment was concerned.

There is evidence that at times the content of a program is not understood. It can be heard, but, for various reasons, it cannot be understood; nevertheless, suspense may be preserved through some strong characteristic such as humor, and the program maintains a high rating.

The importance of establishing suspense is evident in *Fast Sooner Hound*. Its absence is noted in the initial scene of *Mountain Born*. Both types of scenes may, however, be clearly understood.

In certain programs rated highest there is evidence

that suspense is, at all times, unified around a central theme. Other programs reveal that suspense is built up in an individual scene and, at the same time, is also unified around a central theme.

ENTERTAINMENT, HUMOR AND SOCIAL CONCEPTS

Entertainment is interpreted, in this study, as that quality in a children's radio program which engages the attention agreeably. This is a broader concept than mere amusement or diversion. That which engages the attention might, at the same time, broaden a child's horizon, enlarge his experiences, foster desirable social concepts, or convey specific subject matter. A radio program, rich in desirable social concepts or subject matter, must at the same time be entertaining if it is to obtain and hold the attention of children. Ennui is easily banished with a slight twist of the dial in school as well as at home. In school broadcasts based on story books, it is particularly important to preserve the delicate balance between desirable social concepts and subject matter on the one hand, and good entertainment on the other. This balance can best be attained through an awareness that social concepts and subject matter must, at all times, be subordinated to the story. The fostering of high ideals is an objective that should not be overlooked in the production of a juvenile radio series any more than in other experiences that enrich children's living. These ideals and subject matter, however desirable, cannot be preached, or allowed to usurp the story.

The program *Winabojo*, a broadcast which received one of the lowest ratings in an entire series, contained a speech of 128 words and occupied about a minute of radio time. The hero, *Winabojo*, was told:

You have proved yourself worthy, *Winabojo*, to carry the message of the Great Spirit. Difficulties will deter you. Bid all the tribes come to the lodges of the Oneidas when the next harvest moon shines upon the lower world. The Mohawk people will come from the eastern gateway, the Onondagas from the center of the great forest, the Cayugas from their fertile valleys, and

the Senecas from their western gateway by the greatest of all waterfalls. While living in the villages of your people, the five great tribes will make the laws to govern the great confederacy. Prepare to greet your brothers with kindness and hospitality that the Great Nation may blossom and all mankind will know that peace and harmony bless the lives of neighbors who share their blessings freely.⁷

Unless the children were studying or had studied about Indians in the social studies class the content and vocabulary of this talk between father and son would be to a large extent meaningless.

In contrast to the direct approach in *Winabojo* to instill high ideals, a more subtle effort to promote kindness was observed in *Black Beauty*, a broadcast among those rated highest. At no time did the concept of kindness to animals interfere with the story. The appeal was in the program without preachment. The story, not the lesson, was at all times uppermost.

An attempt to educate the audience in the life of a sheep farmer was much too evident in *Mountain Born*, which was among the programs rated lowest. As described earlier, the broadcast began with the birth of a lamb, followed the lamb to maturity and old age, and ended with its death. There was little time or opportunity for Peter, the boy who owned the lamb, to enjoy his pet. Peter asked many questions about raising sheep and shearing sheep, which revealed the script writer's emphasis on presenting subject matter rather than on telling a good story about a boy and his pet lamb. The failure of this program was indicated in the children's remarks. (See page 49.)

Traplins North, one of the broadcasts rated highest, also presented subject matter, but details describing life in the far north were subordinated to the story which told the adventures and difficulties of two boys who earned their living by trapping. The subject-matter background of the listeners was enriched as they followed the boys in their struggles against wild animals and the elements. At the same time, however, the children were entertained.

The Blind Colt, another program rated among the highest in a series, presented subject matter concerning cattle-ranch life; yet the story of the struggles of a little colt, born blind in the badlands of South Dakota, was at all times the major theme.

The preceding evidence reveals that serious subject matter and the development of social concepts have a place in radio adaptations of juvenile fiction. These desirable factors must not, however, usurp the story.

The development of desirable social concepts is a serious and difficult responsibility for the teacher of elementary school children. Its importance is not minimized by giving it a subordinate place in radio adaptations of juvenile books. Properly utilized, these programs can become important supplementary aids in developing desirable social concepts; however, such programs should not be expected to assume the major part of the burden. Well-organized social studies and reading programs, sensitivity to everyday problems of living together harmoniously, and constant emphasis on desirable human relationships are more direct avenues of approach to the development of desirable social concepts. Writers of adaptations of juvenile books for radio or television might well heed Somerset Maugham's statement: "It is enough to be a good novelist. It is unnecessary to be a preacher, a politician, or a leader of thought. . . . It is an abuse to use the novel as a pulpit or a platform."⁸

The children's ratings of certain programs indicate that they are in full agreement with Mr. Maugham. In *Fast Sooner Hound*, one of the broadcasts rated highest, there is no effort whatever to build desirable social concepts. No lesson is preached, no subject matter emphasized. The story paces along with the dog, Fast Sooner, as he outraces freight trains, local passenger, "The Limited," and finally "The Cannon Ball." The entire program is permeated with humor.

Similarly, *The Great Geppy* reveals no emphasis on social concepts or serious subject matter. In two different series it was rated among the highest. Humor permeates this story of a most unusual red-and-white striped horse.

with a deep bass voice for business purposes and a feminine voice which portrays his conscience. A most intriguing snort frequently reminds the children that he is, after all, a horse. With more than the customary amount of "horse sense" the Great Geppy displays his talents as a detective, much to the amusement of the juvenile audience.

Mr. Popper's Penguins, another humorous program, appears among those rated highest, not only by the main subjects used in this study but also by the groups used for comparison. Mr. Popper and his amazing menagerie of penguins were always entertaining whether in the privacy of their habitat, the refrigerator in Mr. Popper's home, or on the public stage where they performed to the strains of Schubert's "Marche Militaire."

The analysis of certain programs rated highest by children reveals that they enjoy the serious programs as well as the completely ludicrous, humorous stories. That both types are welcome is further revealed in the following comment made by a child concerning *The Great Geppy*.

"I think for a change this program is very good, but if I had to listen to it every week, I wouldn't like it because it was just sort of silly but it was nice for a change." Another child remarked, "I think we should sort of have a change, like one week you might have a serious story and the next week you might have sort of a humorous story to get a change each week so you won't be bored." When this child was asked if he thought the series succeeded in having variety, he answered, "Well, I don't think they have enough of the funny stories. I think they've mostly been too serious."

In evaluating certain juvenile programs from the standpoint of their emphasis on social concepts, it must be remembered that radio drama is still among the youngest of the communication arts. Certain juvenile programs reveal a treatment similar to that given to early books for children. The adult ideas and preaching in the broadcast *tinajojo* might one day sound as quaint as the contents of *The New England Primer*. Books specifically for children appeared first in the eighteenth century--many years

after the invention of Gutenberg's printing press which so vastly increased the number of adult books.

No Robert Louis Stevenson or Hans Christian Andersen has appeared in juvenile radio. The presentation of more stories known as the classics, enhanced by the auditory and visual appeal of radio and television, should contribute much to the enrichment of children's experiences, especially to the reading program of the elementary school. Juvenile television, still in the embryonic stage opens up a vast new reservoir for the production of programs based on juvenile books. History need not repeat itself in juvenile televised programs in which puppet shows of dramatized stories such as *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp* have already proved satisfactory.⁹

Summary.--Entertainment in children's radio programs may be of such nature that it engages the children's attention agreeably, and, at the same time, broadens their horizons and enlarges their experiences.

In children's radio programs of book adaptations desirable social concepts must be taken into account; nevertheless, they must be subordinated to the main purpose which is to tell a good story. Juvenile radio programs of book adaptations should not be expected to assume the major responsibility for building desirable social concepts. A more direct approach to the development of these important concepts is through the human relations problems that occur daily in the classroom and in the specific social studies subject matter of the elementary curriculum.

Serious as well as humorous themes appeared in programs rated highest over the five-year period. The variety proved highly desirable and entertaining.

Certain children's radio programs, like some of the early children's books, have been patterned after adult ideas. The result has been an overemphasis on social concepts. The creation of entertaining, and at the same time enriching, broadcasts should be a challenge to writers and producers of juvenile radio or televised programs.

VOCABULARY

Vocabulary in the present study includes all those words chosen to convey ideas. It concerns not only new words and phrases accepted as standard English, but also dialect and accent, slang and grammatical errors. Dialect is generally accepted as a form of provincial language differing in pronunciation or vocabulary or both from the standard literary form. It may include the natural speech of a certain group such as "peasant dialect, rural dialect, or Negro dialect." Accent consists of the modulation of voice and the manner of speaking or pronouncing. Accent usually refers to the speaking of English by one whose native tongue is not English. Slang generally consists of the popular, unauthorized vogue of speech. Grammatical errors appear most often in the dialogue of a character whose formal education is limited. Selection of a vocabulary for a program, whether in the form of standard English, dialect, accent, slang, or grammatical errors, must be determined by its contribution to the genuineness of characterization and of locale.

New words and phrases in a radio book adaptation must take into account not only genuineness and comprehensibility but also their contribution to the literary quality of the program. A simple vocabulary, one within the child's maturity level, and an enriching vocabulary, one that will stimulate the child's imagination, must be combined in a fiction series heard in school, where a direct effort is made to increase children's vocabularies through listening, speaking, and reading.

Words and phrases not likely to be understood in isolation can sometimes be made clear through familiar words in the sentence or paragraph in which the difficult word occurs. This provision for understanding through context is as desirable in children's radio programs as it is in their books. In *The Great Geppy*, words appear which obviously are too difficult to understand. Isolated from their context, the following words and phrases are quite meaningless to most children: "A suitable sleuth for all solvable crimes . . . ventriloquist . . . possessed rare intuition . . . witnessed by notary public

... Lloyds of London ... a singular person ... slight hypertension of the carotid artery complicated by a perfectly natural anxiety over a coming unnatural experience." Evidence that certain parts of *The Great Geppy* were not understood has been discussed earlier (page 52). The vocabulary might have been partly responsible for this lack of comprehension; nevertheless, the program as a whole was well received both times that it was produced over the five-year period covered in this study. This program was rated relatively high in comprehension in Reid's study¹⁰ in which teachers' judgments of children's comprehension was one of the factors considered in the ratings of the 1940-1941 series of *Tales from Far and Near*. Of the sixty-one teachers reporting, 79 per cent rated it comprehensible "all the time," and 20 per cent of the teachers rated it comprehensible "most of the time"; thus 99 per cent rated this program comprehensible all or most of the time.¹¹

Although general context can be an aid to meaning, the definition of words might also be employed in order to insure comprehension. The understanding of the word "boomer" is essential in the development of the plot of *Fast Sooner Hound*. The word is defined effectively in the script in the lines:

Boomer: I'm a boomer fireman and I'm looking for a job.

Roadmaster: So you're a boomer. Well, I know what that means. You go from one railroad to another.

The effective use of repetition for comprehension is also apparent in the preceding quotation. A word is only heard once on the air unless provision is made for its repetition. It is obvious that frequent repetition or definition would result in a stilted, stereotyped script; therefore, explanation through context, for the most part is likely to be more satisfactory in children's programs.

A difficult vocabulary is closely related to the complexity of the social concepts being developed. (See page 66.) The complex concepts of *Winabojo* required words too difficult for the children. This weakness is more likely to occur in a social studies program than in a program

in which the emphasis is on enjoyment rather than on information. Since, in a radio program, there is no opportunity to turn back for comprehension, it is essential to provide adequately for the meaning of new words and phrases. Regarding this problem of comprehension of vocabulary through context, Reid states: "It is possible, of course, that some of these words, when used in a context of familiar words and ideas, presented no difficulty to classroom listeners, but while their use in the *Tales from Far and Near* programs cannot be condemned categorically, it can certainly be questioned."¹²

The presence of accent and dialect, slang and grammatical errors in children's programs continues to be a controversial issue. The need for children to speak their native language well, and the fact that children tend to imitate the speech they hear, are points emphasized by those who would eliminate all but standard English in children's radio programs, especially those heard during school hours. Such an extreme view would sometimes eliminate genuineness of characterization, without which a program lacks color. Dialect is as characteristic of people as their customs and traditions; furthermore, it must be remembered that "dialect is not a degraded literary language; a literary language is an elevated dialect."¹³ Likewise, accent might be natural and necessary in the speech of people whose native tongue is not English; however, an accent or a dialect that cannot be understood or one that is not genuine, has no place in children's radio programs. (Comprehensive, genuine accent and dialect will be discussed more fully under the general heading of the importance of voice in children's programs.)

Although understandable accent and dialect have a recognized place in radio programs, the extensive use of slang and grammatical errors is much more questionable. In the production of children's radio programs, the problem need not be how to eliminate slang and grammatical errors, but rather how to minimize their use and at the same time preserve the genuineness of characters. In other words, the problem of the use of slang and grammat-

ical errors in children's programs is one of limitation, not of elimination. Unless slang and grammatical errors are essential in order to portray genuine characters, they should be avoided in children's programs.

A close examination of certain programs in which slang appears raises the question regarding the amount of slang actually necessary. *The Blind Colt*, a program rated among the highest, is interesting to examine from the standpoint of vocabulary, as revealed in the following three groups:

New Words and Phrases

mustang	coyotes
sagebrush	shale butte
chokecherry	box canyon
rim of the badlands	wolf bait
scabbard	sourdough biscuits
greasewood	rim rock
mustang band	whinnied
bull bats	corral poles

Dialect, Provincial Expressions

paste you plumb outta	purty as paint
your saddle	right likely lookin'
don't reckon	surefooted as a goat
kind of a crittur	reckon he's smarter than I
gunnysack full of trouble	figgered

Slang, Incorrect English

durned if he can't	me and Whitey
too durn bad	ain't a-goin'
them's just China eyes	anyways
ain't no	him and Spot
somewheres	I ever seen
wouldn't be good for	ain't good for nothing
nothing	

The new words and phrases pertaining to ranch life and the provincial expressions used are indigenous to the locale of the story. The need for excessive use of slang and grammatical errors in the portrayal of character is diminished by the storytelling quality in the voice of one of the main characters in *The Blind Colt*. In telling

the story Uncle Torwal speaks 900 consecutive words of script without slang or an error in English. (See page 92.) Furthermore, the choice of words preserves genuineness. (Quality of voice is discussed more fully under its own heading.)

In certain programs, slang and grammatical errors seem irrelevant to the genuine portrayal of a character, yet both are used quite extensively. One of the most humorous and enjoyable scenes in *Mr. Popper's Penguins* is that in which Mr. Popper asks the service man to rearrange the handle of the refrigerator so that his penguins can go in and out more conveniently. The service man uses many grammatical errors as he talks to Popper, none of which seem necessary. Is it not quite possible that a service man for a refrigerator company might have at least an eighth-grade education, and even highschool? In fact, it is not out of the realm of possibility that he might have attended a technical school after high school. It seems reasonable, therefore, that the character could be genuinely portrayed without the use of excessive incorrect English. It is to be noted that in this same scene Mr. Popper, a house painter, speaks correct English yet genuineness is not jeopardized. The grammatical errors in the service man's speech were probably intended to increase the humor; however, the ludicrous nature of the scene itself seemed to require no artificial embellishment in the form of slang or grammatical errors.

In *Fast Sooner Hound*, one of the highest rated programs during the five-year period, there seems to be an attempt to introduce as much slang and incorrect English as possible; however, at times the correct forms slip in accidentally and quite inconsistently. The railroad engineer at one time says, "This ain't slow," and at another, "They'll say the train isn't any good." Boomer, one of the characters, says "Me and Sooner ain't choosy," and also "There's no use for all this." To be consistent with his incorrect forms, Boomer should have said, "They ain't no use" or, to be consistent with the correct form he might have said, "We're not choosy." "You ain't mangy" does not sound any more genuine from Boomer than

"You aren't mangy." The same roadmaster who says "You ain't never seen" also says, "I never saw anybody shovel coal." To be consistent, he should have said, "I ain't never seen nobody." It would seem much more desirable, however, to have had him say "You never saw" and permit children to hear the correct form. The use of contractions can often produce the informal, natural conversation required, making unnecessary the extensive use of grammatical errors.

There are evidences in some programs, however, where incorrect English seems necessary for the genuine portrayal of a character. In *Fast Sooner Hound* the boomer fireman says, "He'll do it easy. . . . We're going to get into trouble running so slow. . . . You busted it." In *Captain Kidd's Cow*, one of the boys said to his pals, "When you hear an owl hoot, it's me." In such a situation "It is I" would sound quite incongruous; however, the sentence "When you hear an owl hoot, start firing" would fit quite naturally, into the context.

Certain successful programs have a minimum of incorrect English and slang. In *Black Beauty* the mother and Black Beauty have speech in keeping with their thoroughbred quality. *Arabian Nights*, *Robin Hood*, and *The Great Gepp* reveal wide variations in locale and characterization and are evidences that slang and incorrect English are not essential for children's enjoyment. A conscious effort to minimize their use in children's programs is highly desirable.

Reid's study¹⁴ stresses the need for a vocabulary within the range of the intellectual and emotional maturity of the listeners; furthermore, the recommendations add, "This does not mean that the story broadcasts omit jargon and slang but simply that the words and phrases should convey meanings."

In the treatment of accent and dialect, Reid makes no distinction between the two. "Logically, of course, dialect should be used only when a character would be speaking English with an accent, e.g., an immigrant to America. Sometimes it may be necessary to use dialect in the development of characterization or in the establishment of

mood, but even in these instances the dialect should not interfere with the intelligibility of the dialogue."¹⁵ The present study stresses the need for a more critical examination of the question, "Is the slang or the incorrect English necessary for the genuine portrayal of character?" It is the responsibility of those planning programs to make a conscious attempt to minimize their use in programs designed for children's listening.

VOICE

The clarity, the contrasts, and the genuineness of the the voices of main characters are interdependent and essential in a radio program for children. The lack of clarity in a voice is described in a child's remark concerning the program *How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick*, which appeared among the lowest in ratings: "Stormalong's voice was *muffled*; I couldn't understand him."

Voice clarity is closely related to diction. Careless enunciation, for the most part, was absent in these public service programs throughout the five-year period. (This practice of clear enunciation should also be encouraged for juvenile commercial programs. Such an expression as "li'l bit" for "little bit," is unnecessary.) Concerning *Robin Hood*, a child remarked, "I think one reason we liked *Robin Hood* so much was because they had clear voices and you could see the peddler walking along the dirty road and you could see them drinking the ale and you could really hear them and see them at the same time."

Tonal qualities should be varied enough to identify each speaker. If voices are too similar in quality to provide contrast, it is difficult for children to tell one voice from another. This lack of clear-cut contrast in voices seemed to be the chief technical weakness in production techniques over the five-year period. Concerning the program *Mr. Bumps and His Monkey*, a child remarked, "I couldn't tell the difference between Mr. Bumps' voice and Mr. Smith's. They sounded too much alike." Another child added, "I think the father's voice and the other man's voice (I don't know what his name was, I for-

got, the man that owned the great big monkey) they weren't different enough. I couldn't tell when each one of them was speaking." Regarding *All Over Town*, a child commented, "The voices should have suited better, the girl a girlish voice and the boys, boyish voices. The voices didn't sound natural enough." In *Little Women*, "One person played the part of two people; it was very confusing, Meg and Jo sounded too much alike." In *The Peddler's Cart*, "The voices were good. They had the captain, the constable, the slave hunter, George's father, and the customer, but you never got them mixed up. I like the way the peddler talked. He seemed just as cool."

In *Shadow in the Pines*, "The Nazi spy and the telephone operator sounded exactly alike." (The voices in this scene were of only a few seconds' duration; nevertheless, the children were aware of the incongruity.) Although voice contrasts contribute much to the success of a program, they cannot save a poor plot. The programs *Mountain Born* and *Winabojo* had excellent voice contrasts; however, both appeared among the programs rated lowest.

In children's programs, the voice of a main character may be clear in tonal quality and in excellent contrast to that of other speakers, but if it is not genuine--that is, if it does not fit the character being portrayed--the success of a program can be seriously jeopardized. The effect of the lack of genuineness in a voice that was clear, and in good contrast with others in a scene, is observed in *Winabojo*. Tom-toms were beating during a scene in which the Indian chief's voice sounded somewhat like a barker in a circus, an inappropriateness which might have contributed to the failure of the program. In contrast to the chief in *Winabojo*, the voice of the Indian, Grey Owl, in *Sajo and the Beaver People*, had a dignified quality which seemed to contribute to the genuineness of the character. Genuineness of voice, however, does not imply the exaggerated "ugh, ugh, me big Indian" too often associated with the portrayal of Indians. An Indian chief is a leader in his tribe. He would undoubtedly speak his own language well; therefore, the quality of his voice and the English used should be in keeping with his position.

The genuineness of accent and dialect in certain children's programs seemed to have been as much affected by the inflection and tone of the voice as by the spoken word. The lilt of the voice for the Scotch accent in *Dougal's Wish* and the rhythm of the Irish expressions in *Shawneen and the Gander* were genuine; yet they were also clearly understood. The Negro dialect in *Sad Faced Boy* and the rural dialect in *Fast Sooner Hound* were at all times understandable. Concerning the popular program *The Coconut Monkey*, a child remarked, "He spoke with an accent but I could understand it."

After hearing *One String Fiddle*, a child added, "One thing I liked, the way they had the mountain people's kind of slang. You could understand them even though they used different kind of dialect. They didn't use too much."

Two programs rated among the lowest in a respective series were *The White Stag* and *Petite Suzanne*. In both of these, the accents were genuine, but they were not clear and, therefore, the children failed to understand the programs. (*Petite Suzanne* is discussed more fully under the treatment of narration, see page 102.)

This study shows clearly that dialect and accent have a place in children's radio programs. It must be noted, however, that genuine dialect acquired at the expense of clarity leads only to obscurity. To deprive children of hearing genuine accents and dialects would narrow the purposes of such a series as *Tales from Far and Near*; nevertheless, the accents and dialects used must be easily understood by children.

The voice not only contributes to the portrayal of genuine characterization; it also serves other important functions. As mentioned earlier, the voice used for the horse in *The Great Geppy* contributed much to the humor of the program (see pages 68-69). In the second production of *The Poor Count's Christmas*, the powerful yet kindly voice of the giant is in artistic contrast to the diminutive, yet clearly understood and friendly, voice of the little fairy. No words need be spoken to convey the giant's immensity or the fairy's tininess. A sense of distance is effectively produced through the voice as she

hops from the giant's feet to his finger; then to his shoulder and to his ear. This auditory appeal is particularly enjoyable to children.

In *Winabojo* there is an eerie, hollow quality in the voice of the great spirit's messenger, quite in keeping with the mood of the scene; furthermore, the voice and diction of the boy hero are appropriate for the son of an Indian chief. The voice was clearly understood and in good contrast with other speakers. The weak, trembling, yet at all times clearly understood voice of the grandmother reveals the power of voice in portraying the age of a character. (Although certain causes for the failure of *Winabojo* have been discussed under the subject of Social Concepts (see page 66) the lack of genuineness in the voice of the chieftain, one of the main characters might also have contributed to the program's failure, in spite of the fact that the other voices seemed appropriate.)

The effect of the voice qualities in a literary radio program is not unlike color values in a canvas. Vachel Lindsay in *Collected Poems* writes: "No musical notation ever invented can express the same musical scheme as the twenty-six letters of the alphabet." Since auditory appeal will continue to exist in television as well as in radio, the selection of voices will continue to be a major problem in the production of artistic, creative juvenile programs. (The importance of voice is also shown in a later discussion of narration.)

Summary.--Three essentials in the selection of voices for juvenile programs are clarity, contrasts, and genuineness. Voices may be clear and in good contrast, but if they are not genuine, the enjoyment of the entire program is jeopardized. Likewise, a genuine voice is useless if it is heard in an accent that cannot be understood. Clear, genuine voices of the main characters minimize the need for incorrect English and slang. To acquaint children with various dialects such as Scotch, Irish, Negro, and rural is highly desirable. Accent can also be used effectively in programs. All accents and dialects must be clearly understood. Tone of voice contributes to the genuine

quality of an entire program. Age, size, and distance can also be conveyed effectively through the voice. The proper use of voice in a juvenile program influences the artistic and creative quality of the program.

SOUND EFFECTS

In the present study, sound effects will be discussed in terms of the contribution to the realistic and to the imaginative quality of the programs. (The use of voice and of music are discussed under separate headings and will not, therefore, be considered in this treatment of general sound effects.)

Children's oral reactions reveal a keen sensitivity to sound effects as revealed in the following discussion of whether or not a sound effect was that of an automobile or of a motorboat. After hearing the program *The Coconut Monkey* John questioned the use of an automobile in what he called "a cannibal-like island" but Bob tried to convince him the broadcast did not have an automobile in it, that it was a motorboat. Jimmie added, "When they were at the monkey's cage, he said, 'Hop in my car and we'll go down to so-and-so's house.' You heard him shut the door, and you heard him start the motor [of the car], and it wasn't no motorboat." Gladys noted that Singapore was quite a city, that it wasn't just a cannibal-like island, but John insisted that if Singapore was a big place, "Why then they'd have sort of a town and hustle and bustle. If it was Singapore, the sound effects weren't very good." (A later replaying of this program on a recording revealed to the investigator that the expression was, "Hop into my car." The sound effects did not seem good for either a car or a motorboat.) Although the sound effects, as a whole, were good in *The Coconut Monkey*, the children's discussion calls attention to the fact that sometimes realistic sound effects are necessary in juvenile programs. It was noted in the treatment of suspense and comprehension that, if the program as a whole was understood, certain confusing parts did not affect the general success of the entire program. A similar conclusion might be drawn concerning

the use of sound effects as evidenced in the high ratings of *The Coconut Monkey*.

Realistic sound effects are not enough; they must also be well timed. The following excerpts from the children's discussion concern the timing of the sound effects of horses' hoofs as Paul Revere rode up to each door and knocked. It must be remembered that these ten-year-old children were not aware of the fact that colonial New England houses were built in such a way that Paul Revere might have been able to gallop directly to the door. Bobby remarked that he thought that there should have been a pause in sound effects between the time the horse's hoofs were quiet and Paul Revere knocked at the door. "He knocked at the door way before he could." Another boy's reaction recorded on Dictaphone showed agreement with Bobby's criticism.

It sounded like that he just . . . uh . . . just came on like a streak (laughing) and went all the way through the house, and didn't stop. The horse couldn't stop, because--I mean he just went like this--Whoa!--and then a knock at the door and up and on and then beat it because I don't think a guy could do that on a horse . . . uh . . . he'd have to get off because . . . uh . . . using a horse . . . most of the . . . uh . . . most of the houses . . . uh . . . have fences and he'd either have to jump the fence and knock at the door or get off it and go through the fence and he just stopped as if he's a superman.

A most effective use of timing was observed in the pauses of the program *The Forty Thieves of Ali Baba*, from the story *Arabian Nights*. The repetition of the tap tapping on the oil jars was followed by the ominous question, "Are you ready?" The portentous pause before the answer, "Not yet," increased the suspense in this radio classic. Its suspense might well compete with the familiar commercial program *The Shadow*. This particular broadcast scene from *The Forty Thieves of Ali Baba* is a classic in sound effects as well as in the story itself. It is most fortunate that the sound effects measured up to the quality of the story.

Sound effects may also be highly exaggerated and in keeping with the imaginative, humorous quality of a story. In the popular program *The Great Geppy* there was a scene in which the famous red-and-white-striped horse was about to be shot from a cannon. As the doctor listened to his heartbeats, there was a sound effect that suggested a powerhouse pump. This exaggeration added humor which was thoroughly enjoyed by the children. Such original use of sound effects was highly desirable.

For the most part, sound effects did not interfere with comprehension in the programs over the five-year period; however, the misuse of a sound effect was probably a major cause for lack of comprehension and the failure of *Gulliver's Travels*. In order to convey the smallness of the Lilliputians, filtered voices which could not be understood were used. Since the lines of the Lilliputians helped to develop the plot, the program was a failure. The fact that other voices in the same scene could be understood increases the possibility that the incomprehension of the Lilliputians was caused by their filtered voices. A similar error occurred in the first production of *The Poor Count's Christmas*, in which the filtered voice of a fairy was not understood. Her lines carried much of the plot; therefore, the program was a complete failure.

A common technique employed to indicate people's departure from a scene was that of voice fading. Children became confused when lines were not heard. It is doubtful, therefore, whether the technique of voice fading should ever be used in juvenile programs. Since the producer had read the script, he alone was in a position to judge the importance of the throw away lines in the voice fades. Too often the words in the voice fades were incomprehensible so that it was impossible for listeners to know whether or not the lost words helped in any way to tell the story. During the first two series of this five-year study, voice fades were most annoying to the children. During the last three series, however, the use of fades was minimized. It is not unlikely that Reid helped to bring about this improvement through his find-

ings pertaining to voice fades. "Of all the criticism of the productions of the programs voiced by teachers, the most common one was directed toward the overuse of fades."¹⁶ Since the present investigator was a cooperating teacher in Reid's study of the 1940-1941 series, it was possible to observe firsthand the improvement in the use of this technique following 1940. It was encouraging to note that the overuse of voice fades was not evident during the last three series of this study.

Children's sensitivity to sound effects are further revealed in such comments as: "In *Fox Island* the boy and the girl in the storm had much better sound effects than the storm in *How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick*. . . . In *The Scarlet Fringe* the gong didn't sound right. It should have been played softer. It was played too much.. In *Mr. Popper's Penguins* the chattering of the birds and the whistling were not so good."

Although sound effects contribute to the enjoyment of a juvenile program, their presence is not essential for successful programs. In the thirteen scenes of the popular program *Black Beauty* there are only four with sound effects and these are limited, for the most part, to barking dogs, galloping horses, the cracking of a whip, and wagon wheels. Similarly, the highly rated program *The Blind Colt* has a surprising lack of sound effects. In view of the fact that most local stations have limited budgets, the simple production techniques used in the production of these well-received stories should be more carefully investigated.

It is impossible in this study to know whether or not phonograph records were used for certain sound effects; however, their use in radio is well recognized. Since there is likely to be more time for tests and improvement in making a phonograph record than in rehearsing for a live program, sound effects on records might be of better quality. There is danger of their use becoming too mechanical, thereby preventing the creative, artistic sound effects that result from a study of the specific script to be broadcast. There is danger, also, of too little thought being put into the timing of these mechanical

sound effects. Their use, however, by local stations with limited budgets, will probably increase, especially in school broadcasts, for which budgets are even more limited than for commercial programs.

Summary.--In the present study, the sound effects were generally of two types--realistic and imaginary. A realistic scene called for realistic sound effects. If a sound effect was not well timed it seemed most unrealistic to certain children. A child reasoned that if a man rode up to a door on horseback, time should have been provided for him to dismount before a knock was heard. The proper use of pauses contributed not only to realism but to the artistic, creative quality of a program. The misuse of a sound effect such as filtered voices jeopardized the comprehension of an entire program. Voice fading or throw-away lines at the end of a scene affected comprehension during the first two years of this study but were not evident during its last three years. Children were sensitive to sound effects; however, their use was not essential in a program. Certain programs which were rated among the highest had a minimum number of sound effects in some scenes and none at all in others.

Phonograph records of sound effects might be used, but there is danger that their use may decrease the development of artistic and creative sound effects that grow out of a particular story. Sound effects will probably continue to be a major factor in the success of radio and televised programs for children.

SCENES AND CHARACTERS

Since the programs analyzed in this study are based on books, the scenes selected for adaptations are of particular interest. The nature and complexity of ideas within a scene necessitate more serious concern than the number of scenes used in developing a program. Scenes with entirely different locales, or with a number of different ideas are naturally more complex for children than scenes with somewhat similar settings and less complex ideas, such as in *The Blind Colt*. Reid and Woelfel¹⁷ discuss the problem of scenes in a program in terms of their number.

"No school broadcast should contain so many scenes and episodes that the listeners have difficulty in following the continuity. Likewise the use of too many scenes may frequently destroy the unity of a broadcast . . . fewer scenes more carefully developed are more interesting and meaningful to listeners." In a later study, Reid states that there were "ten to fifteen scenes in most of the thirteen programs, plus an announcer's or narrator's explanatory transitions. . . . In a thirty-minute broadcast five or six scenes are usually sufficient; in a fifteen-minute broadcast three or four scenes."¹⁸

In the present study, the program *The Blind Colt*, which was rated exceptionally high in two different ratings, has nine scenes in the thirty-minute program; however, the locale does not vary greatly and the ideas within scenes are not too varied or too mature for ten-year-old listeners (see page 62 for synopsis). The program *Wina-bojo*, among those rated poorest, has about seven scenes, but the ideas and the social concepts are too mature for the listeners. *Mountain Born*, among those rated lowest, has about fifteen scenes. The ideas in this program are not too complex, but the way in which the scenes are developed reveals the lack of suspense. *Black Beauty* and *Arabian Nights* each has thirteen scenes, yet both programs appear among the programs rated highest. *Black Beauty* is of particular interest because of its simplicity of background in certain scenes, for example, the initial scene in the pasture where Plack Beauty is talking to his mother. In the same background is the next scene showing the killing of the hare. Similarly, the scenes of *Captain Kidd's Cow* are confined in or near the boat. The plots are so well developed that the somewhat similar backgrounds are not monotonous or the number of scenes confusing. The result is a simple structure particularly well adapted to the ten-year-old level.

Reid in his study of the 1940-1941 series of the *Tales from Far and Near*¹⁹ found that the number of characters in the dramatized broadcasts varied from six to thirteen (plus the announcer, Niles Welch), with an average of eight dramatic characters in a broadcast. Whether these

characters are portrayed by eight entirely different people is not taken into account; neither is there mention of the number of main characters as distinguished from characters that are merely incidental in the development of the plot. In *Fast Sooner Hound* four main characters develop the entire plot. The dog is an important character and, although he does not talk, his bark speaks for him. In the crowd scene of *Fast Sooner Hound* only about two voices which carry the plot are heard; none of the incidental remarks of the crowd are essential in understanding the plot. In *Black Beauty* two to four characters convey the whole plot. The entire broadcast of *The Blind Colt* has two main characters besides the blind colt whose presence permeates the entire program without any audible form of communication. *The Great Geppy* has minor characters coming in and out of scenes, but the main plot is developed by not more than four or five main characters in any one scene. All of these broadcasts appear among those rated highest, but it is also noted that *Mountain Born* and *Winabojo*, which appear among those rated lowest, do not have more than four or five main characters developing the main plot.

The examination of these programs rated highest indicates that a maximum of four or five main characters were about the number used in developing good plots in a thirty-minute program. This same number, however, used in a poorly developed plot has no effect whatever in raising the ratings of these programs.

The use of minor characters in children's programs should be examined critically from the standpoint of their contribution to programs.

Summary.--Careful attention must be given to the nature and complexity of the different ideas included in scenes which develop the plot in a book adaptation for juvenile radio. In a program rated exceptionally high by children, the different ideas expressed did not involve social concepts above the maturity level of the listener. Scenes with somewhat similar backgrounds appearing in carefully developed plots were well received by children. In certain programs rated highest the number of scenes with

similar background were as high as thirteen, but the number of different main characters did not exceed four or five. The fact that the use of two to five main characters and somewhat similar background in scenes seemed sufficient in the development of certain programs rated high by the children should be an encouragement to local stations, with limited budgets.

CHILDREN AS MAIN CHARACTERS

A tradition that seems to have grown around this relatively new medium of radio concerns the almost universally accepted idea that children prefer at least one child as a main character in a juvenile radio program. Woelfel and Reid state: "School broadcasts usually have greater interest value to classroom listeners when children or adolescent characters are used in the presentation." In general, the use of at least one character approximately the same age as the intended listener should be encouraged. Attention is called, however, to the danger of introducing juvenile characters "which have no apparent justification except as a deliberate device to catch student listeners' attention."²⁰ If a script writer takes the suggestion to include at least one child character, there is danger that the result will be precisely what the authors deplore. It is well that those responsible for *Tales from Far and Near* did not feel confined to select stories that had a child as a main character. Such outstanding successes as *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, *Robin Hood*, *The Forty Thieves of Ali Baba*, and *The Great Geppy* would have been omitted.

It is true that in certain programs rated highest, such as *Captain Kidd's Cow* and *The Blind Colt*, a child does appear as a main character, but a child also appears as a main character in programs rated lowest, such as *Winabojo* and *Mountain Born*. The idea of children as main characters for juvenile radio programs is probably a carry-over from the field of juvenile books, in which the printed page is solely responsible for sustaining the interest. Radio or television, in which auditory and visual perceptions are enhanced, seem to require no limi-

tations of age. Certainly a child's imagination is not limited to that which children might do or say. A child might identify himself with Mr. Popper quite as readily as with one of the boys in *Captain Kidd's Cow*. Whether or not the child identifies himself with any main character is beside the point, for how he, an individual child, enjoys a program, is largely a matter of his emotional temperament. His enjoyment is the all-important factor. Grumbine is quite definite in suggesting age levels regarding this matter of the use of children as main characters in stories selected for broadcasts.

Stories about boys and girls exactly like themselves are particular favorites. . . . Hero worship is one of the instincts that may be used advantageously in building radio programs for children. It starts to develop from four to six years of age and increases materially from seven through nine. It continues in girls from ten through twelve and in boys from ten through thirteen years, though at this time heroes of their own age have the most appeal.²¹

Those who are in direct contact with children observe the obvious fact that elementary school children from at least the third grade and possibly lower enjoy many adult programs. Baker substantiates this observation in his study based on 10,000 questionnaires from which he concluded that children "prefer emotionally charged or exciting programs whether written for children or adults."²² Gottenberg and Neal go so far as to conclude that "children are not especially interested in juvenile broadcasts."²³

It must be noted that the term "children" includes a wide age range; however, this study indicates that the presence or absence of a child character is irrelevant so far as ten-year-old children's enjoyment of certain radio programs produced for in-school listening is concerned. The selection of good stories with suspense, within the maturity level of the listeners, is the major prerequisite in the production of enjoyable school broadcasts of book adaptations.

NARRATION AND DIALOGUE SCENES

An emphasis on dialogue scenes rather than narrated programs is a generally accepted technique for juvenile broadcasts. (The term "dialogue scenes" rather than "dramatizations" is preferred in this study, since narration as well as dialogue scenes may be dramatic.) The extremely high ratings given to certain programs, in which narration was the major production technique, raises a doubt regarding the prevailing preference for dialogue scenes. There is danger that the ancient art of storytelling will be submerged into a mere transition technique for building backgrounds or for changing scenes.

The popularity of dialogue scenes was a natural result of the advent of radio which made possible less expensively a wider range of dramatic presentations. The network juvenile audience, at best, is limited. Public service programs are not self-supporting. Their existence depends on the more lucrative sponsored program, and consequently their production is restricted by a more meager budget. The result is obvious in such economies as the frequent doubling of parts for different characters--a technique, incidentally, which was rarely unnoticed by the children who participated in this study.

In view of the present situation in which networks are no longer producing school broadcasts, local stations, whose budgets for juvenile programs are much more limited than those of the national networks, will have to examine every possibility for producing juvenile programs of good quality at the least possible cost. It is obvious that a narrated scene can be planned less expensively than a dialogue scene; therefore, it is timely to examine the use of narration in certain programs evaluated in the present study.

In *The Blind Colt*,²⁴ which was rated among the highest over the five-year period covered in this study, narration was the major production technique. (A synopsis of this program appears on pages 62-63.) There were about eight minutes of dialogue scenes throughout the entire thirty-minute program. The broadcast's first scene was

narrated. This was followed by a dialogue scene of about three minutes in which Uncle Torwal and the boy, Whitey, the only characters in the program, discussed shooting the newly born blind colt. Uncle Torwal continued telling the story during which three very brief dialogues were interspersed. In one of these Whitey merely asked a question which took about three seconds. Uncle Torwal and Whitey had two more conversations. One lasted about eight seconds, the other about one minute. At the close of the program there was another scene of about three minutes. This general structure in which narration had a major place in the program seemed entirely satisfactory.

Of particular interest in this program was the fact that one of the two main characters was also the main storyteller or narrator. Uncle Torwal told the story and it was Uncle Torwal who talked to Whitey. This type of voice doubling seemed acceptable, perhaps because there was no attempt to disguise the voice of Uncle Torwal.

It is further noted that an announcer spoke part of the narration but Uncle Torwal was the main storyteller, a most fortunate occurrence. His voice had a storytelling quality in which there seemed to be sincerity, casualness, and naturalness all of which were in keeping with the theme of the story. His voice provided an interesting contrast to that of the radio announcer whose speech sometimes gave the impression that it was his duty to impart information rather than tell a story. The voice of a good storyteller is described by Grumbine's description of Irene Wicker: "Her voice projects a personality that inspires confidence in boys and girls and a feeling of security. This is accomplished because of her ability to project interest and patience through her voice over the microphone."²⁵

Uncle Torwal narrated a three-minute scene in which the blind colt was bitten by a rattlesnake. The first minute had no sound effects. During the remaining minutes of the scene, brief sound effects of about five seconds each were heard. Three of these were the buzzing sounds of the rattlesnake. Their repetition seemed to add

to the suspense of the program. There was also the brief stamping of the blind colt's hoofs as he sensed danger, and again, at the end of the scene, as he "snorted with terror, whirled, and ran for his mother, bumping into things as he went." The unique simplicity of the content and of the production technique of this scene is evident in the following two excerpts from the program. The literary quality of these excerpts justify a full quotation. They are evidences of what an outstanding reviewer of children's books wrote concerning this story.²⁶

Torwal: During the late spring and early summer the band of mustangs didn't travel much. There was plenty of grass on the flats and the water holes were nearly all full. One or another of the mares usually was to be found a little distance from the rest, where she could keep a watchful eye on the surrounding country. When it was the brown mare who was standing guard the colt stayed close to her side. When she looked, he listened, and when she listened, he listened too, and stretched his nostrils wide to smell. This way he learned many things. Things surrounding him were only sounds and smells as far as he could tell. Unable to see them, they of course had no shapes. Bull bats catching bugs overhead in the evening were only booming sounds. Coyotes skulking around about their business of catching small rodents and robbing birds' nests were Rank Furry Smells. Jack Rabbits were furry smells too, but smaller and dustier. The Rabbits were also Small Sneezes and Thumping Noises. He learned to recognize the step of every horse in the band, and could spot the step of a strange horse immediately. He learned to tell the difference between the irregular movements of a loose horse and the steady purposeful gait of one ridden by a man. One drowsy afternoon in the middle of summer the blind colt was browsing among the broken banks of a black shale butte some distance from the other horses. After a time he noticed an odd

smell. One that was new to him. It was sharp, but not very strong. He lowered his head and snorted his nostrils clear, to catch the new scent better. It didn't have the warmth and body of an animal smell, and yet there was something about it that frightened him a little, he didn't know why. He stamped and snorted, but nothing happened, and there was nothing moving that he could hear. So after a little he went on with his search for grass. He had worked around a jutting shoulder of the butte when he noticed the smell was suddenly stronger and then he heard a buzzing--something like a grasshopper. [Buzzing sound effects about four seconds.] But a grasshopper's buzzing had never given his skin the tingly feeling he had now. He was puzzled. He listened in all directions, pointing his ears this way and that, but the sound had stopped. As soon as he stepped forward he heard the buzz again [buzzing sound effects about four seconds] and this time it was sharper and louder. It came from somewhere on the ground nearby, but as soon as he stopped to locate it, the sound stopped. He stood motionless for several minutes, waiting for it to come again, and when it didn't he figured that whatever had made it must be gone, and returned to his search for grass. But when he stepped forward again the buzz returned [buzzing sound effects about five seconds] and this time it had a nervous, angry sound. The smell was stronger, too. The colt was frightened, and hadn't been able to figure out where the sound came from so he didn't know which way to run. He stamped his foot [stamping hoofs about five seconds] and as he did there was a dry rustling and a sudden movement from under an overhanging ledge at his feet as something struck his foreleg a sharp blow. He'd been bitten by a rattlesnake that had crawled under the ledge for shade. The colt snorted with terror, whirled and ran for his mother, bumping into things as he went. [Galloping sound effects]

Another narrated scene in *The Blind Colt* described the wolves' attack on the colt and his mother. The first minute of narration was spoken without any sound effects. In the three remaining minutes the howls of wolves were heard three times. As in the previous scene, the repetition of these brief sound effects added to the suspense of the scene. There was also the snap of the trap and the sound of horses' hoofs. These sounds ranged from five to twenty-five seconds' duration.

The second scene was also outstanding because of its simplicity of content and of production techniques.

Torwal: With the beginning of fall, things were more pleasant for the horses. The hot wind stopped blowing, and a few early rains soon filled some of the smaller water holes so the bands could graze farther out on the flats where the grass was high and rich.

By now, the wolf pups were beginning to run with the old ones, learning to kill, and scarcely a night went by that they didn't hear the howls of the big "grays." And then, one night, when it was clear and cold, with a bright full moon, the blind colt mixed with the wolves himself. The horses had moved down into the broken country of the badlands to get out of the wind. They were scattered around over the floor of a little canyon, some lying down and some asleep on their feet when an old mare on the outskirts of the band suddenly snorted in alarm. In an instant every horse was on his feet, wide awake.

A pair of old gray wolves and three pups had been creeping towards them from the down-wind side, to keep the horses from smelling them. But a sudden eddying of the wind around the wall of the canyon had brought their scent to the old mare and now the band was alarmed, only waiting to see just where the danger was before they started to run. [Sound effect of wolves about three seconds.] The wolves gave up their creeping tactics then and made a sudden rush for a

yearling standing alone on the side nearest them. [Sound effects wolves.] There was a moment's confusion, and then the horses were thundering down the canyon and out on the flat, a solid black mass of flying manes and tossing heads in the moonlight.

[Howl of wolf and stampede of horses' hoofs, fading away slowly with wolves . . . take right out]

Torwal: [On cue] As long as the band ran closely grouped as they were, there was nothing the wolves could do but follow until some began to straggle. For a mile or more they ran, and then they came to a place where the ground was rough and broken by side canyons and small buttes of one kind and another, which were bound to divide and scatter the running horses.

Seeing what was coming the brown mare whirled to the right, desperately trying to break back to the open flat. But she found the way blocked by the wolves so she turned the other way and swung up a side canyon that seemed to lead up to the rim rock and the open country above. The other horses were already gone and the mare and the colt galloped between the steep canyon walls with all five wolves at their heels. Before they had gone more than a little way the horses found their road to escape was a trap instead, for it turned out to be a box canyon with high walls all around and no way out except the way they had come.

Crowding the colt into an angle of the canyon wall, the mare whirled at bay between him and the wolves. In spite of the fact the horses were fighting for their lives it was comparatively quiet there in the moonlit canyon. The only sounds were the snorting of the horses and the soft thud of their feet. The wolves panted quietly as they sat on their haunches looking

the situation over, or padded warily around trying to find a way past the mare's sharp hoofs.

For a time the horses were safe, but it looked like only a matter of time until the repeated attacks of the wolves would tire her. . . . Sooner or later, while she was drawn to one side by one wolf another would find an opening to slip through to get behind her for a slash at her haunches where the great tendons are. For that is the wolves' way. If they can cut the tendons, the horse, hamstrung, is no longer able to fight and the kill is only a matter of minutes.

The fight had been going on for perhaps a quarter of an hour and the mare as well as a couple of the wolves showed the marks of it when an interruption came from a most unexpected source. A small washout in one wall of the canyon had at some time been used for a wolf den, and at the entrance to it was a wolf trap, set and forgotten by some wolfer long ago. It was so caked with rust that all the man scent had long since disappeared so the wolves paid it no mind. Spring floods and summer rains had washed silt and trash into it and over it, blocking the pan until it was almost harmless.

But the mare in her first rush up the canyon had kicked it out into the open, and the wolves had since been running back and forth over it, every time shaking loose a little more of the trash that clogged it. At last one of the pups, happening to step squarely on the rusty pan, was surprised by a loud snap [sound effect of the snap of a trap] and the feel of the steel jaws grasping a front leg just above the paw. [Sound effect of howling wolf pup.] The squall the pup sent up turned the attention of the rest of the wolves away from the horses, and as they gathered around the trapped pup, whining and whimpering, the mare made a break for the open, with the colt close behind. Bowling over a straggling pup that

got in the way, they galloped down the canyon, back to the mustang band from which they had been separated.

The rate of speech during these two scenes was not too rapid for these ten-year-old children, as indicated in their high ratings of this program. In the scene where the blind colt was bitten by a rattlesnake, Uncle Torwal spoke about 187 words in the first minute. In the scene with the wolves, which lasted about four minutes, 900 words, almost all narration, were spoken. The average of 225 words per minute did not seem to be too rapid. The simplicity of vocabulary probably accounts for this relatively high number of spoken words per minute. In the second scene, the first five lines contain 47 words, 39 of which are one-syllable words. An early study conducted by Lumley and reported in Levenson's book concerned rates of speech. Lumley found that "the average syllable rate was roughly 240 per minute and the word rate 160 per minute. Slight differences were shown to exist between the rates of delivery for speakers addressing adults and those addressing school children.²⁷ Levenson adds further "what constitutes a normal rate cannot be stated arbitrarily, for much depends upon the type of material, the speaker's personality, and the type of audience."²⁸

The outstanding success of the program *The Blind Colt*, which was chiefly narrated, calls special attention to the need for more study of narration as a major production technique in school broadcasts. The increased cost of juvenile televised programs necessitates a more thorough study of the possibilities of narration for televised adaptations of juvenile books.

Another outstanding program in children's enjoyment was *Sajo and the Beaver People*, which was also chiefly narrated. This program was rated highest in the 1939-1940 series. The children's oral reactions in the class discussion of this program were consistent with their individual written ratings which were made at the end of the series. "The narrating just fitted the story. . . . It didn't need to be acted. . . . In the other one [*One*

String Fiddle] we didn't like the narrator's part. In this one we did." Paul stated that he didn't enjoy it for two reasons: "You could tell what was going to happen and they [the producers] should have had characters [meaning dialogue scenes]." Another child added, "It wouldn't have sounded right if they acted it with the beaver and all. They had a different narrator for the different people. . . . They had to tell how they found the beavers and how they went to the city. It was good like that." Another child remarked, "Paul must have missed a lot. There was a big otter trying to get the babies. There was a big fight. During the fight two babies were swept down the stream." Another child commented, "I would like to have it acted out and see the difference." This last remark would probably be one way that narration could be adequately evaluated.

Black Beauty and *The Story of Captain DeKay*, two programs with outstanding ratings in children's enjoyment, were also programs in which narration was the major production technique. In certain other programs, however, in which narration was used rather extensively, ratings were mediocre. In *The Red Canoe* the narrator had an accent which was not too clear. Its percentage of Excellent ratings was 53, and its rank $9\frac{1}{2}$ in a series of 22 programs, at the end-of-the-broadcast ratings, and 21 per cent with a rank of 16 at the end-of-the-series ratings. In the program *Tin Maker Man* the percentage of Excellent ratings was zero, its rank $21\frac{1}{2}$ in a series of 22 programs in the end-of-the-broadcast ratings. The program maintained a low rank of 20 at the end of the series; its percentage of Excellent ratings was 5. The narrator took the part of different characters in the scenes, and the result was confusing.

In *One String Fiddle*, the children referred definitely to the way in which narration was used. "I didn't like the narration so much because it sort of sounded like he was breaking up lines. There was a pause whenever the narrator came in, saying 'said Herbie.'" (The continuity of the story was interrupted by the words "said Herbie.") Another child remarked, "I think since the fiddler had

his own voice, Herbie should have had his, too." The narrator spoke the lines of a main character in *The Blind Colt*; consequently, there was no confusion or interruptions as there seemed to be in *One String Fiddle* and *Tin Maker Man*.

That narration can become too complex was seen in the program *Call It Courage*, a program with mediocre ratings.²⁹ Three narrators, two men and a woman, took turns reading the script. There seemed to be a definite understanding of "Now it's my turn, now it's your turn," in the reading. One of the men who narrated seemed also to have been the announcer. He had a well modulated voice, but it was more the voice of a radio announcer imparting information than that of a storyteller who had captured the mood of his story. The second man's voice was highly dramatic; he spoke clearly and with much emotion. He overdramatized to the point that he seemed to be working too hard in his effort to make the children become interested. He lacked completely the casual, easy, informal presentation of the narrator in the highly rated broadcast *The Blind Colt*. The woman's voice in *Call It Courage* was well modulated and clear. She spoke in a good tempo; however, in her attempt to present voice contrasts, there were times when her voice was almost inaudible; the whisper could not be clearly understood. At all times she seemed to be reading a script rather than telling a story.

In *Call It Courage* the announcer took about one minute, 13 seconds, the music and sound effects took about two minutes, 54 seconds, the man and woman narrators had about nineteen minutes, 45 seconds. This time included different narrators' lines that ranged from about 5 to about 115 seconds in duration with an average of about 30 seconds; thus the choppy "your turn, my turn" effect. This procedure was in direct contrast to that used in *The Blind Colt*, in which uninterrupted narrations were as long as 195 seconds.

In dialogue scenes different voices are generally used to identify different characters; this is not necessary in narrating a story. It is likely that the purpose of the three narrators in *Call It Courage* was for variety,

a means of avoiding monotony. The content of the script and the production techniques should be critically examined before utilizing a variety of narrative techniques to promote interest. No narrator or number of narrators can take the place of a well-written and well-produced script based on a good story.

In *Call It Courage* one narrator almost reached the point of hysteria in the scene where Mafatu was killing a shark. In a half-frenzied tone he seemed to be trying to convince the children that this was the most exciting thing they had ever heard in their lives. In sharp contrast to this lack of restraint is the narration of the rattlesnake scene in the broadcast *The Blind Colt*. Through his voice the narrator seemed to convey the idea that the story happened "just like this," and he left the burden of interest on the story itself. *Call It Courage* is an example of what the good narrator should not do in a broadcast for children. More careful study of the narrator's ability and of the quality of the story is essential in the preparation of successfully narrated broadcasts.

Previous research studies in the field of school broadcasts has also considered the use of narration in children's programs. Three separate studies concerning *Tales from Far and Near* are reported by Reid. In a preliminary study of eight programs in the 1939-1940 series of *Tales from Far and Near*, Reid³⁰ based his findings on written questionnaires of children from grades three to seven (one third grade, five seventh grades, and nine intermediate grades--three fourth grades, two fifth grades, three sixth grades, and one combined fifth and sixth grades). Reid concludes: "Most children prefer dramatizations rather than narrations of stories."³¹ The random sample upon which this generalization is made is described as follows: "The sample each week has been a reliable one; division into smaller random samples has not materially affected the distribution of the answers."³²

Since only two narrated programs were included in the eight evaluated, it is questionable whether the data warrant any generalization concerning narration. Furthermore,

in the eight programs the two narrated broadcasts were not rated the lowest in children's enjoyment. *One String Fiddle*, largely narrated, was enjoyed Very Much by 89 per cent of the children and its rank was 4 in the ratings made immediately after the program. At the end of the semester its rating as One of Three Favorites was 40 per cent with a rank of 4. The corresponding ratings for *Sajo and the Beaver People* was 75 per cent with a rank of 7, and 21 per cent with a rank of 4 at the end of the semester ratings.³³ The lowest rated program in Reid's first study is *The White Stag* which, for the most part, was not narrated.

In his second study³⁴ Reid evaluated twenty-five programs of the 1940-1941 series. Again, only two were narrated, *Petite Suzanne* and *Biography of a Grizzly*. Findings were based on teachers' judgments from a questionnaire. The judgments were made at the end of the broadcast. In this nation-wide study Reid generalized concerning narration. "The broadcasts should be dramatized rather than narrated." However, he conceded:

It may be that in future broadcasts, narrative techniques can be used which will make the stories interesting and enjoyable to student listeners. (The art of story-telling is an old one, but only infrequently has it been used successfully in radio; viz., the tales of such individuals as Alexander Woolcott or John Nesbit.) Student reactions to the 1940-41 broadcasts which were narrated, however, indicated quite clearly a preference for dramatization. [Reid's term "dramatization" is synonymous with the phrase "dialogue scene" in this study. See page 90.]³⁵

In a third study, Reid included thirteen programs of the 1940-1941 series--that is, the first semester's programs. He calls special attention to the number of narrated programs included:

The fact that two of the thirteen broadcasts were narrated rather than dramatized seemed unfortunate on a network series heard throughout the entire nation. . . . In using narrators rather than dramatic casts, the

broadcasts failed to meet one of the unique advantages of network school broadcasts.³⁶

Reid concludes:

Generally speaking, students preferred dramatizations to narrations of the radio stories. The broadcast, *Petite Suzanne*, which was narrated, was one of the least-liked programs in the series, and many teachers said their students might have enjoyed the story if it had been dramatized. At the same time, of course, the dramatization of *Meggy MacIntosh* was enjoyed even less than was the narration of *Petite Suzanne*. Although no general conclusions concerning the question of narration versus dramatization can be reached from the data in this particular study, it seems unquestionable that students preferred the stories to be dramatized. Other factors, as well as the method of presentation, undoubtedly influenced students' enjoyment or lack of enjoyment, of programs--e.g., the unexciting plot in *Petite Suzanne* and the love story in *Meggy MacIntosh*.³⁷

Although Reid provided ample evidence of a number of causes other than narration for the failure of *Petite Suzanne*, he nevertheless recommends that narration should be eliminated.

First, the story was not so interesting to students as others in the series have been, since it was narrated rather than dramatized and since it lacked action, excitement, and suspense. Second, the French dialect and unfamiliar names made the broadcast version of the story difficult for many students to follow and understand. . . . The French accent was so pronounced that the children could not follow the story. . . . The suggestion for improvement made most frequently was that of dramatizing the story rather than narrating it. . . . The most frequent criticism was that students had difficulty in understanding the dialect. . . the most difficult part of the broadcast, according to some teachers, was that of Batees telling the story of Madame Gattneau, a difficulty undoubtedly due to his heavy accent. . . .

Over half of them recommended dramatization in preference to narration, and a third of them suggested reducing the accents.³⁸

Petite Suzanne was also rated low in the present study. The chief cause for its failure is summed up in the comment of a boy who said, "The accent of the man and girl were terrible. I couldn't make out what they were saying." It is obvious that if a child cannot "make out" what is being said, he cannot enjoy a program. This program was one of a very few whose chief cause for failure might be quite clearly identified in an accent that was not clear. The findings of the present study indicate that it was the authentic, but nevertheless unintelligible accent in *Petite Suzanne* that contributed much to its failure.

The confusion concerning the narrated broadcast *Biography of a Grizzly* was identified in the present study in a child's comment: "Why all the trees talking and voices coming out of the head? It didn't make sense."

Reid provided a thorough and valuable description of various ways in which narration was used in certain programs.

In two of the thirteen broadcasts, *Biography of a Grizzly* and *Petite Suzanne*, double narrators, a man and a woman, were used to tell the story and to interpret some of the characters. Teachers rather frequently reported that this technique confused students, that once in a while a character would supposedly break into the reading and then leave suddenly, and the reading would begin again.³⁹

Moreover, judging from the comments of several teachers, the technique of using two narrators in order to simulate dramatization was not entirely successful. In fact these teachers suggested that using two narrators tended to confuse students and to make the story more difficult to follow.⁴⁰

In two of the eleven stores which were dramatized, the narration from scene to scene was carried by one of the characters rather than by the announcer. . . ,

in *Winterbound* by the mother reading and commenting upon letters from her family and in *All Sails Set* by the old man, Thatcher, reliving scenes of his youthful voyage.⁴¹

In *All Sails Set* . . . the use of the old man as narrator seemed to confuse listeners and to be unnecessary to the story. This is not to imply that the use of a narrator should be abandoned, but rather that the technique of using one character to recall events of his childhood seems to be confusing rather than helpful.⁴²

The broadcasts with two exceptions provided through dramatized action, experiences which teachers could not provide within their classrooms. *Biography of a Grizzly* and *Petite Suzanne*, which were narrated, teachers could have read to their classes. Even these programs, however, had professional narrators so that listeners had the opportunity of hearing trained actors read and interpret the stories.⁴³

In the last quotation Reid does not distinguish between reading a story and telling a story, two quite different techniques in the presentation of narrated fiction for children.

Summary.--Certain programs, in which narration was the major production technique, were rated extremely high in the present study of children's written and oral reactions to school broadcasts adapted from children's fiction. The wide variety of narrative techniques used in the program focuses attention on the need for serious consideration of the quality and kind of narration used in children's programs.

A desirable type of narrative technique seemed to have been employed in the production of one of the most outstanding programs of the five-year period, *The Blind Colt*. In this program the rather complex narrative technique of having the narrator also take the part of a main character was used successfully. It is important to note that he was identified as the same person, so that the confusion that sometimes results from doubling was avoided.

The way in which the narrative technique was used some-

times interfered with the unity and continuity of a program; that is, the means overbalanced the end--which, at all times, should be to tell a good story. In *Call It Courage* the three narrators gave the impression of having a reading lesson with rotated turns rather than telling a good story.

The narrator's voice was shown to be a strategic factor affecting the success of a narrated program. Sincerity, naturalness, restraint and simplicity marked the voice of the successful narrator.

Before further recommendations are made to eliminate narration from children's programs, more study is needed in evaluating the quality of narration now employed in children's programs. Greater emphasis on the selection of the story, and the development of suspense, must also be taken into account in any evaluation of narration as a technique for children's programs. The narrative technique not only proved to be desirable, but it was also the most feasible technique that could be used in certain programs.

An emphasis on the quality of narration used in children's programs is particularly timely in view of the fact that local stations with limited budgets, rather than national networks, will in all probability be producing most of the school broadcasts of the future. It must be remembered that narration is, after all, merely a technique to be utilized in producing a program based on a good story, with sustained suspense.

TRANSITION TECHNIQUES, MUSIC, CROWD SCENES

Transition techniques are generally thought of as those conventionalized sound devices which indicate change in locale. The transitions used in *Tales from Far and Near* included all the techniques suggested by Crews,⁴⁴ such as music, sound, silence, an announcer, and the combination of these four elements. As in most radio productions, music was the chief transitional device. Crews calls attention to the fact that the use of music is limited only by the skill and sensitivity of the composers.⁴⁵ Its artistic use was quickly identified by the children in

the popular program *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*. Throughout the entire broadcast music was not only a transitional technique but, furthermore, it helped to tell the story. At times it was artistically substituted for words. When the lines "off with his hat" were spoken the organ music whisked off the hat most effectively, much to the amusement of the children. One child remarked "The music fitted this story better than in any other program." Originality in organ music as revealed in *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* should be encouraged. Such treatment of music is a tribute to the organist who created the music. Local stations with limited budgets need to investigate carefully the potentialities of organ music beyond its use as a mere transition technique.

In building the mood of a program, music can contribute much. The strains of "I've Been Working on the Railroad" could be heard during the race of the dog, Fast Sooner, and the trains in the program *Fast Sooner Hound*. In the highly rated program *The Great Geppy* the famous red-and-white-striped horse went to sleep in his stall to the soothing strains of Brahms' "Lullaby and Good Night." This humorous use of music was quickly identified by the children. The harmonica music and tap dancing of the boys in *Sad Faced Boy* was particularly enjoyed. Among other contributing causes to the failure of *The White Stag* was one mentioned by a child: "Aleta was not a good singer." In *All Over Town* there seemed to be a direct effort to ridicule a small town church choir. The children in this study thought the choir was hilariously funny; however, to use music in such a manner is a distortion of its function.

There is no evidence in the present study that music in any way caused a program's poor rating. In certain programs rated lowest, the music served its function as well as it did in programs rated highest. Music cannot make a poor broadcast good, but it can make a good broadcast much better.

For the most part, music served its function effectively in establishing moods for new scenes and in providing a transition technique. Levenson calls special attention

to the use of music in children's programs, with the warning: "When broadcasting for children especially, ample time should be taken in order that the atmosphere may be definitely established."⁴⁶ This warning might well be applied to all transition techniques. Producers of adaptations of juvenile books must be particularly vigilant regarding the problem of rushing transitions in order to cover a story. Suspense cannot be developed if scenes are too rapidly shifted. A producer must remember that, after all, the children have not read the script. His great familiarity with every part of the script can result in the weakness of *assuming* that children will understand without providing them adequate time for comprehension.

The silent transition, although sometimes effective, can, at other times, be confusing to children. Crews⁴⁷ calls attention to the fact that the silent transition is "probably most useful to cover a lapse within a scene where neither characters or scene changes."

In children's programs, the silence transition must be used most cautiously, if at all. In the program *Winabojo* thirty years were neatly disposed of by a few seconds of silence and a new scene was begun. The result was most confusing to children. The use of the silent transition in this program probably contributed to the many other causes for *Winabojo's* failure. (See page 66.)

Crowd scenes, for the most part, were limited in these programs of *Tales from Far and Near*. The absence is perhaps desirable, for unless crowd scenes are handled most skillfully, a producer runs the risk of committing a cardinal offense in children's programs--interference with comprehension.

Certain scenes depicted groups of people congregated without order. The undertones, fragments of sentences, simultaneous talking added to the spirit of the program. So long as the words spoken were not necessary to convey the meaning of the plot, this technique was effective. In *Fast Sooner Hound* a crowd of people congregated at the railroad station to witness the finish of the race between the "lop-eared" hound and the "Cannon Ball" train. The chattering and humorous remarks had no particular respon-

sibility in developing the plot and the result added to the general mood of the program. Similarly, in *The Great Geppy* a crowd assembled outside the freak house to view the famous sea horse. The undertones of the crowd did not prevent hearing the few remarks needed in the development of the plot; consequently, the scene was successful.

For the most part, the announcer served the conventional purpose of introducing the story. Occasionally, the announcer took part in the actual telling of the story, a responsibility which should be allocated, for the most part, to a storyteller.

Summary.--In the programs evaluated in this study, transition techniques included music, sound, silence, an announcer, and the combination of these four elements.

Music, for the most part, succeeded in its chief function as a transition technique and in building the mood. There was some evidence that original music was sometimes substituted for words in the development of the plot in programs. The dearth of creative music composed especially for these programs calls attention to the need for greater effort in this direction. Organ music seemed especially well adapted to the *Tales from Far and Near* series.

If music and words are used simultaneously, great care must be taken that the music will not interfere with the comprehension of the story. Music can, furthermore, contribute to the humor of a program, a highly desirable function.

There is no evidence in the present study that music was in any case a cause for a poor rating.

In these programs announcers had the conventional function of introducing the story, but they are not recommended as storytellers, an entirely different responsibility.

Certain crowd scenes were effective in these programs. Great care must be taken, however, to prevent crowd scenes from interfering with comprehension.

SELECTION OF SCENES

In adaptations of juvenile books, the selection of scenes is important. Scenes from books which children suggested for adaptation on the air included one from *Tom Sawyer*:

There is one scene in which Tom is helping himself to the sugar. His aunt warned him what would happen, she didn't exactly tell him but she said there'd be a sort of war anyhow. Later Sid comes in and reaches for a sugar lump. He breaks the bowl. Tom sits there thinking rosy, happy thoughts of how Sid would be punished. While he is sitting there thinking Aunt Polly comes in. In the meantime Sid has slipped out. She sees Tom sitting so innocent and happy thinking those happy thoughts, and she grabs him by the scruff of the neck with one hand and he gets a switching.

Scenes from *The Magic Clock* were also recommended. "Each number is a year. It goes back years or forward years. It has all different experiences. It goes back to the colonists' time and up to the time of the air circus. I thought the air circus would be especially good for radio."

From *Wacky, the Small Boy* a child suggested "the scene where Wacky is in the new room and they are all trying to be small like Wacky." Another boy (particularly small in size) added, "They all want to be small like him. He is sitting at a ball game, and the ball goes over his head and hits the boy behind him. They could tell that part on the radio." A girl contributed another scene from *Wacky, the Small Boy*. "They were playing Follow the Leader and Wacky was the leader. He goes under a low gate. If he were a couple inches taller, he couldn't have made it. The others follow and get a severe blow; they couldn't slouch down. When they hit the bar, the radio could have sound effects like someone bumping their heads."

Scenes from the book *Skinny* include, "the part where they initiate him and give him an egg shampoo." Virginia added, "And the part where they singe his hair, they

don't really, they just pretend to." There is the suggestion by the teacher that such a scene might not be good, that some children might be foolish enough to try singeing someone's hair. Another child wants to know how an egg shampoo could be shown on the air, but Dave had the matter settled by a sound effect in which "you could hear the egg crack." Another scene was that in which Skinny was made to walk into a well during his initiation, but Dave explains, "They made him walk off a board blindfolded. The board is on bricks."

Whether or not the script writer has the privilege of changing scenes was a question on which the children had quite definite reactions. Concerning *Robin Hood*, a child remarked, "They can't rewrite the whole story, so they just took some incident. . . . I don't think they should change it." Another child commented, "Authors wouldn't like it, and he [the author] wants the original, I should think. They [radio producers] should have the original story, not change it all around the way they want it."

An outstanding example of a faithful adaptation of a book on a broadcast was that of *The Blind Colt*. The two scenes quoted from this broadcast (see pages 92-97) reveal almost the identical words from the book. A few sentences were left out. The last sentence of each scene was changed in order to preserve unity as one scene led into another. At the close of the scene in which wolves attacked the blind colt and its mother, the lines in the book read: "They galloped down the canyon leaving the wolves to solve their own problem." In the broadcast, the scene ends with the lines: "They galloped down the canyon back to the mustang herd from which they had been separated." The high rating of this program suggests the desirability of preserving, as far as possible, the author's original text; furthermore, authors, if possible, should be consulted regarding adaptations.

During the discussion of scenes from books the children expressed disappointment in certain scenes that had been chosen. "They took the wrong scenes from *Little Women*--like the last scene of the family together, the first scene in the book would have been much better, where the

four girls are talking together. . . . Ice skating by herself and throwing Jo's book away were bad scenes. Jo and Laurie wouldn't take her along and the book was destroyed. A good scene would have been where Amy brings limes to school. More time for *Little Women* would have helped."

It is of particular interest to note that the program *Little Women* was heard in February, and the comments concerning it were not made until the end of the series in April. The children's dissatisfaction made a lasting impression. The percentage of Excellent ratings for this program in a series of 24 was 35 per cent and its rank was 21 in the rating made at the end of the broadcast. The corresponding figures for the end of the series were 26 per cent and rank 17.

Regarding the adaptation of scenes, another child remarked, "In *Biography of a Grizzly*, we didn't hear the fight between the bears. I love it in the book. It was much better." In radio adaptations great care must be exercised to avoid causing a dislike for the book.

CHILDREN'S DESIRE TO READ THE BOOK

Data on children's desire to read the books which had been adapted on the air were obtained during the 1942-1943 series. It must be noted that, even though a child expressed the desire to read a book and checked it out of a library, there was still no evidence that the book had been read. Objective evidence, therefore, is limited to the children's desire to read the book and not on actual proof that the book had been read. A desire to read a book, however, generally precedes most leisure reading. The availability of the books was the greatest factor affecting children's actual reading of the book.

The extent to which the broadcasts instilled a desire to read was approached through two questions to the children. At the end of each of fifteen broadcasts of the 1942-1943 series, each child was asked, "Would you like to read the book?" (yes or no); and "Have you read the book?" (yes or no).

There was an average of a little more than one half (55 per cent) of the children who expressed a desire to

read the books from which the fifteen broadcasts were produced. The programs rated highest in the percentage of Excellent ratings were also highest in the percentage of children who desired to read the book. *The Citadel of 100 Stairways* varied most. This program also showed the greatest difference in rank in the ratings given to it at the end of the series as compared to those given to it at the end of the broadcast. The percentage of children desiring to read *The Blind Colt* was the highest among the fifteen programs. *Young Mac of Fort Vancouver* was rated lowest in the children's desire to read the book. *The Blind Colt*, rated high, had relatively few changes in locale. This program is in sharp contrast to the somewhat large variety of different settings for *Young Mac of Fort Vancouver*, which was rated low. *The Jinx Ship*, also relatively low in ratings, is another program with a variety of different complex settings. *Captain Kidd's Cow*, relatively high in children's rating reveals a more simple structure. The examination of fifteen broadcasts of the 1942-1943 series indicates that the children desired to read those books that had been particularly enjoyed as broadcasts.

Reid's findings, based on a national study concerning the 1940-1941 series, were similar to those of the present study. "The less enjoyable broadcasts failed almost completely in stimulating students to read."⁴⁸

THE SELECTION OF BOOKS FOR ADAPTATION

The book from which a radio adaptation is made is the basis for a successful broadcast. The most gifted producer or script writer cannot create quality in a story that has none. The responsibility for this selection must therefore be entrusted to those especially qualified for this important task; furthermore, these experts should work in close coordination with the producer and, if possible, the author.

In the production of *Tales from Far and Near* the experts consisted, for the most part, of members of the Radio Committee of the Association for Arts in Childhood. The *Manual* for the 1940-1941 series included an impressive list of organization which cooperated--The National

Education Association, The American Library Association, and the Association for Childhood Education. By 1941-1942 these prestige organizations had decreased to only the National Education Association, and in the 1942-1943 and 1943-1944 manuals none of these organizations were mentioned. The Radio Committee for the Association for Arts in Childhood seems to have shouldered most of the responsibility.

This committee was most explicit in the purpose underlying the selection of books. The 1939-1940 *Manual* stated:

In these fine examples of modern literature, children will discover the beauty of stories well told. They will find excitement and humor and imagination, blended by the skill of the experienced story-teller. It is interesting to note that four of the authors whose stories we present are winners of the Newberry Medal, highest distinction to authors of children's books.⁴⁹

In the 1940-1941 *Manual* the purpose of *Tales from Far and Near* continues its emphasis on reading.

It presents a selection of outstanding fiction for children, covering a wide range of reader interest and age level. . . . The basic conception of *Tales from Far and Near* is to bring to children a greater use and enjoyment of books. Just as the librarian may introduce a new book or author by telling the printed story to small groups, so the radio dramatizes for its wider group of listeners the appeal of the book--and creates and stimulates the desire to read.

In the 1941-1942 *Manual* we find this statement: "The basic purpose of *Tales from Far and Near* is to bring to children a greater understanding and greater use of books. . . . Equally important as the enjoyment of the story is the wish to read more."⁵⁰

The 1942-1943 *Manual* states: "From outstanding books for children come these broadcasts. They were selected by experts on children's literature . . . the broad aim of this program--to instill in children a love for fine tales, good books, and a habit of turning to them for

joy and refreshment. . . . We offer to the schools of America this year a program of books having real distinction of thought and style."⁵¹

In the 1943-1944 *Manual*, along with the usual emphasis on books there is a new emphasis on evaluation:

It is a recognized fact that children spend much of their leisure time listening to the radio. Consequently it is a wise school that provides time on its program for the listening in and evaluating of programs. Surely there is no program with a greater universal appeal than *Tales from Far and Near* since the telling of a story has its roots in folkways.⁵²

These excellent standards might have been read and taken for granted by the investigator had not the children themselves called attention to the quality of certain books. The following quotations appear in books from which adaptations were made. It must be noted that the broadcasts carefully omitted these scenes, but nevertheless, the books were suggested for children's reading. Referring to the low standards of living of certain Italians, a character in one book remarked, "The kids are as dirty as pigs, lousy, too, I guess. I see a couple of them digging their heads." In the same book the use of what the *Webster International Dictionary* refers to as an "offensive term" as well as the undesirable social relationships between a brother and a sister are also evident. "Doesn't Ellen make you feel like puking?" asked John with brotherly candor. Donald was too polite to answer, but he shared John's opinion."

The following quotation from a book selected for adaptation should not have been overlooked by those responsible for the selection of books for these series. "Tobie [girl of twelve] stood meditatively looking at the back of her brother's head and switching her rock from hand to hand. When he was a proper distance away she let fly with the rock. It was a very pretty shot and caught Tommy squarely on the back of his head. . . ." Later Tommy had his revenge

Tommy [boy of fourteen] turned to his sister, eyed her up and down as she stood there in what she called her

"Welcome Guests dress" and suddenly tackled her around the knees. There was a brief terrific but silent struggle until Tommy came up with his sister thoroughly pinioned. Walking unsteadily as he carried her squirming weight, he waded out into the sea and dumped her. Still without a word he pushed her under with both hands, jumped on her and stood there.

These three quotations are from a book selected as one of the outstanding juvenile books published in 1937. Since prejudices come all too early in children's lives, why thrust prejudices at children in such quotations as these which appear in another book: "Minister's boys worst scamps in town. . . . He's awful hateful but never misses a service. . . . Dogs hate him. . . . Peter Slobbit [who doesn't go to church] has all the dogs following him." These lines were written by an author who was a Newberry prize winner for another of her juvenile books. None of these quotations are in the broadcast, yet in one production a small village church choir is ridiculed through the use of exaggerated singing. Such raillery should be avoided.

For help in judging the literary quality of the books used for adaptation, the investigator checked the titles of the five series in the seventh edition of the *Children's Catalogue*, which is made up of 4,200 selected books:

Approximately 1100 books are starred for first purchase in this edition. Of these, 500 are marked with two stars. They are, on the whole, the books of lasting merit which ought to be made available to all children. The titles marked with a single star, about 600 in all, are books which have been found to be most generally useful in libraries and which have a wide appeal to children.⁵³

Slightly more than three fourths (77 per cent) of the books that appeared on the School of the Air Series over the five-year period 1939-1943 were listed in the *Children's Catalogue*.

Slightly less than one fourth (23 per cent) of the

books are listed as books of "lasting merit," and about one tenth (11 per cent) are recommended for first purchase. The remaining 43 per cent appear in the *Children's Catalogue*.

There is a special need to examine books chosen for permanent phonograph recordings, such as are increasing at the present time. An error in selection is heard only once on a live program, a mistake will be countlessly repeated on a recording. Future series of either radio or televised fiction programs should be adapted from more books of "lasting merit" than were included in the list of selections for *Tales from Far and Near*.

Chapter V

TESTING THE INVESTIGATOR'S JUDGMENTS OF CHARACTERISTICS RELATING TO THE APPRAISAL OF CERTAIN CHILDREN'S BROADCASTS

IN order to test the investigator's judgments regarding the extent to which certain characteristics seemed to appear in specific programs, it was necessary to obtain opinions from others. The investigator selected four programs to be used with the judges; two had been rated extremely high and two extremely low by the children in their individual written ratings. Programs with extreme ratings were selected in order to get a wide range with respect to enjoyment as judged by the children. The children's ratings of the four programs are presented with the percentage of excellent ratings and the rank of each program in the series in which it appeared.

TABLE 10

FOUR BROADCASTS' RATINGS BY INTERMEDIATE GRADE CHILDREN

Date Heard	Program	Children's Ratings				Number of Programs in Series
		Percentage of Excellent ^a Ratings		Rank		
		End of Program	End of Series	End of Program	End of Series	
Feb. 10, '44	The Great Geppy	86%	73%	6	4	24
Jan. 27, '44	Mountain Born	29	6	23	24	24
Oct. 28, '43	Fast Sooner Hound	95	74	1½	3	24
Dec. 3, '43	Winabojo	56	25	18	20	23

^a Excellent -- "enjoyed all of it."

Eighteen characteristics presented to the judges had evolved during the investigator's analysis of certain programs. In order to make these characteristics more meaningful and practical, subheadings were arranged under each characteristic. These subheadings not only indicated the possible extent to which a characteristic might appear in the broadcast, but also helped in its interpretation. The number of subheadings under each characteristic depended upon the nature of the characteristic being judged. In formulating these subheadings it was important for the investigator to keep in mind the fact that the judges heard the programs only *once*; therefore, it was necessary to express the subheadings in a way that would minimize mere guesses. For example, "all voices clearly identified throughout program" is subject to more guessing than "most voices clearly identified." In one hearing it would be quite impossible to check such a factor as voice identification to such an exact degree. Through the use of transcriptions it was possible for the investigator to take this difference of degree into account. The characteristics with subheading are as follows:

Characteristics Relating to Children's Appraisal of School Broadcasts

1. *Suspense*

- a. Present for the most part and unified around central theme
- b. Present within some scenes but not unified around a central theme
- c. Absent for the most part

2. *Emphasis on entertainment rather than moralizing and building social concepts*

- a. Dominant emphasis on entertainment with little or no overt stress on moralizing; or on building desirable social concepts
- b. Primary emphasis entertainment; overt moralizing and building social concepts secondary, but not jeopardizing entertainment
- c. Much emphasis on overt moralizing and on building

social concepts; jeopardizing entertainment or enjoyment

3. *Social concepts involved in subject matter of program*
 - a. No undesirable social concepts in subject matter
 - b. Some undesirable social concepts in subject matter
 - c. Many undesirable social concepts in subject matter
 - d. Inaccurate information concerning subject matter developing social concepts
4. *Identification of settings for new scenes (Transitions)*
 - a. Identification of new scenes obvious at all times; did not interfere with comprehension
 - b. Occasional confusion in identification
 - c. Difficult to identify most of the time; interfered with comprehension
5. *Accent and dialect (Manner of speaking)*
 - a. Easily understood and realistic in portrayal of main characters
 - b. Realistic portrayal of main characters but not always understood
 - c. Not realistic in portrayal of main characters but easily understood
 - d. Neither realistic nor understood
 - e. None
6. *English usage*
 - a. Little or no incorrect English
 - b. Incorrect English used but no more than seemed necessary to portray genuine characters
 - c. More incorrect English than seemed necessary to portray genuine characters
7. *Slang*
 - a. Very little or none
 - b. Some slang used but no more than seemed necessary to portray genuine characters
 - c. More than seemed necessary to portray genuine characters
8. *Vocabulary*
 - a. Minimum use of colloquial expressions, new words and phrases not easily understood either through context or through definition

- b. Excessive use of colloquial expressions, new words, and phrases not easily understood either through context or through definition
 - c. Oversimplified--talking down to children
9. *Humor*
- a. Used frequently throughout program, either through spoken lines, through sound effects, through music, or through combination of all three
 - b. Some
 - c. Little or none
10. *Voice genuineness of main characters*
- a. Most voices of main characters genuinely portrayed
 - b. Certain voices of main characters not genuinely portrayed
 - c. Most voices of main characters not genuinely portrayed
11. *Voice contrasts for identification of main characters*
- a. Most characters immediately identified through voice contrasts
 - b. Certain voices of main characters not immediately identified
 - c. Many main characters not identified through voice contrasts
12. *Music*
- a. Substituted for words in telling story or in increasing humor
 - b. Used chiefly for transition, subordinated to theme, at the same time contributed much to mood of story
 - c. Used chiefly for transition, contributed little or nothing to mood of story
 - d. Extensive simultaneous music and spoken lines but did not interfere with comprehension
 - e. Extensive simultaneous music and spoken lines which did interfere with comprehension
13. *Nature of sound effects*
- a. Most important sound effects appropriate (realistic or imaginative, well used)
 - b. Certain important sound effects not appropriate
 - c. Most sound effects not appropriate

14. *Subordination of sound effects*
 - a. Subordinated most of time to story; did not interfere with comprehension
 - b. Certain important sound effects not well subordinated causing lack of comprehension
 - c. Not subordinated throughout program
15. *Crowd scenes*
 - a. Subordinated most of time; did not interfere with comprehension
 - b. Frequently interfered with comprehension
 - c. None
16. *Dialogue scenes*
 - a. Chief production technique
 - b. Very little used
17. *Narration*
 - a. Chief production technique; used more than dialogue scenes
 - b. Used less than dialogue scenes, chiefly for transition of scenes, for backgrounds, introducing new scenes
18. *Narrator's voice*
 - a. Voice revealed personality; genial, sincere, personal quality enriching mood of story but subservient to main theme
 - b. Voice satisfactory, not exceptionally good or exceptionally poor
 - c. Voice lacking in personality; announcing rather than storytelling or overdramatic; not always subservient to theme
 - d. Voice not understood; entirely unsatisfactory

Since the purpose in utilizing the judges was to test the investigator's judgment concerning the extent to which certain characteristics seemed to appear in specific children's programs, it was necessary to select people qualified to make such judgments. People who had no interest in the improvement of juvenile radio programs, or who rarely heard one, or people chosen at random might result in judgments based on ignorance of the subject at hand. Since it was also intended that these characteristics might be used by others in a position

to obtain a wide variety of children's reactions to programs, it seemed reasonable to select judges representative of the groups who would most likely be appraising school broadcasts.

Three educators, two women and one man, were selected. The three had either taught, or were teaching, intermediate grade children. One was a specialist in a State Department of Elementary Education; one was a principal of an elementary school; and one a fifth grade teacher. Judge M, the man, had had less recent direct contact with children in the classroom than had the other two judges or the investigator. (It had been nine years since Judge M had taught ten-year-old children.) None of the judges had had previous experience in organized radio evaluation of juvenile programs; however, Judge S had listened to one of these broadcast series with a group of children. Judge H was teaching intermediate grade children at the time of the test.

The three judges met in the investigator's home where the four transcriptions and a play-back machine were available. Two programs, 30 minutes each, were heard at one meeting, and two a few days later. Before the program each judge was given the list of the characteristics to be used in appraising the programs and told to read it through without comment. Since it was intended that other groups who might use this appraisal form would have had previous acquaintance with it before hearing the program to be judged, this preview seemed warranted. The judges were asked not to discuss the list before using it. Questions were answered after hearing and rating the first program. The investigator wished to find out whether there were ambiguities; therefore, no explanation of the characteristics or subheadings was given orally before the judgments were written.

After the first program was heard, the judges questioned certain subheadings. These were revised for clarity and definiteness. One of the subheadings, for example, concerned the narrator's voice, "voice of typical, ordinary radio announcer." One judge thought in terms of a particular radio announcer he knew, another wasn't

sure what was meant. The investigator changed the sub-heading to read "voice quality average, not exceptionally good or exceptionally poor." The judges were then asked to rate the programs according to the revision. In general there was no difficulty in understanding the list of characteristics or the subheadings.

The data concerning the judges' agreements are presented in the following tables:

Table 11 presents the percentage of agreement of each individual judge with the investigator.

Table 12 presents a comparison of the agreements of the judges and the investigator on each characteristic.

In pursuing the question of the extent of agreement between the investigator and the judges, consideration was given to the agreements of the investigator with each individual judge and the judges with each other in each individual program. These data are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11

PERCENTAGE OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE INVESTIGATOR
AND EACH JUDGE ON CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING
THE APPRAISAL OF FOUR SCHOOL BROADCASTS

Program	Judge	Number of Character- istics	Actual Agree- ments	Percentage of Agree- ments	Average Percent- age
The Great Geppy ^a	M	18	13	72%	83%
	S	18	18	100	
	H	18	14	78	
Mountain Born ^a	M	18	14	78	87
	S	18	15	83	
	H	18	18	100	
Fast Sooner Hound ^b	M	18	17	94	94
	S	18	17	94	
Winabojo ^b	M	18	15	83	92
	S	18	18	100	
TOTAL		180	159		

^a Eighteen characteristics (three judges).

^b Eighteen characteristics (two judges).

The cumulative average percentage of agreements between the investigator and the judges on all the programs is relatively high (88 per cent). In these data there were a possible 180 items of agreement and on 159 of these the judges and the investigator agreed. No program showed a relatively low percentage of agreement between the investigator and the judges.

Judge M agreed less with the investigator than either of the other two judges in three out of four comparisons. Judge M's average percentage of agreement with the investigator, however, was relatively high (82 per cent). The corresponding percentages for Judge S and Judge H were 94 per cent and 89 per cent, respectively. Judge M and Judge S agreed more with the investigator on the last two programs than on the first two programs. On one of the last two programs, *Fast Sooner Hound*, there was 100 per cent agreement between Judge S and Judge M, and their agreement with the investigator on this program was higher than on any other program. In the comparisons no one program varied noticeably in average percentage of agreements from that of the others. The addition of a third judge who rated only the first two programs did not affect to any marked extent the average percentages of agreement between the investigator and the judges.

Although Judge M, the man, disagreed more with the investigator than the women judges, there is no indication that he disagreed consistently with the women judges or that the women judges agreed consistently with each other. In the first program, Judge M agreed with Judge H (a difference of six points). In the second program he agreed about as closely with Judge S (five points of difference). The difference in agreement between the two women judges on the first program was about the same as their difference on the second program (28 and 22 points, respectively). Individual differences among the three judges probably accounted for these slight differences. In general, however, there was relatively high agreement among the people whose judgments were being compared. In examining the extent of agreement among the four programs, as a whole, regardless of the number of judges judging each

program or the number of programs rated by each judge, the results compared favorably.

Further treatment of these data presented more specific findings pertaining to the extent of agreement in specific characteristics. Table 12 considers the following questions:

1. Which characteristics showed greatest disagreement?
2. What was the extent of agreement on each of the eighteen characteristics?

3. On the characteristics in which there was greatest disagreement how do the judges compare with each other?

From Table 12 the extent of disagreement between the investigator and the judges can be summarized as follows:

Eight characteristics had no disagreements

Three characteristics had one disagreement

Three characteristics had two disagreements

Four characteristics had three disagreements.

TABLE 12

COMPARISON OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN INVESTIGATOR AND JUDGES
ON SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING APPRAISAL
OF SCHOOL BROADCASTS

Character- istic	Judgments in Agree- ment with Investigator	Judgments in Disagree- ment with Investigator	Judges Disagreeing ^a
1	8	2	M, S
2	8	2	H, S
3	9	1	H
4	10	0	-
5	7	3	M, H, M
6	7	3	M, M, S
7	8	2	M, M
8	7	3	M, H, M
9	10	0	-
10	9	1	S
11	10	0	-
12	9	1	M
13	10	0	-
14	10	0	-
15	10	0	-
16	10	0	--
17	10	0	-
18	7	3	M, M, S

^a Initials indicate specific judge who disagreed.

Judge M expressed twelve out of the twenty-one disagreements as contrasted to five expressed by Judge S who also appraised the same four programs. It is possible that the more recent direct contact of Judge S with children accounted for this difference.

The nature of these disagreements must be examined. The numerals in the following list refer to the number of the characteristic as it appears in the list on pages 118-121

Characteristic with

<i>100 per cent agreement</i>	<i>90 per cent</i>	<i>80 per cent</i>	<i>70 per cent</i>
4. Identification and settings for new scenes	2. Social concepts involved in subject matter	2. Entertainment vs. moralizing and building social concepts	8. Vocabulary
9. humor	12. Music	1. Suspense	5. Accent and dialect
11. Voice contrasts for identification of main characters	10. Voice genuineness of main characters	7. Slang	6. English usage
13. Nature of sound effects			18. Narrator's voice
14. Subordination of sound effects			
15. Crowd scenes			
16. Dialogue scenes			
17. Narration			

SUMMARY

The total percentage of agreement between the investigator and the three judges on the eighteen characteristics was relatively high (85 per cent).

Most of the disagreements between the judges and the

investigator, and also among the judges themselves, centered around five characteristics, namely, accent and dialect, English usage, slang, vocabulary, and the narrator's voice. On the last mentioned there appeared the smallest number of agreements.

The highest percentage of agreement between the investigator and the judges, as well as among the judges themselves, appeared in the program *Fast Sooner Hound*. The program was also rated very high in extent of enjoyment by the children who participated in this investigation.

The characteristics are sufficiently defined that persons with similar professional backgrounds and orientation show rather high agreement.

It must be remembered also that the four programs judged were of the same general pattern, radio adaptations of juvenile books. Had there been a variety, such as newscasts, music, or sports, there might have been a greater diversity in agreements.

Furthermore, the fact that the programs used in the test had received extreme ratings from the children might have produced more unified results in adult judgment than the use of programs which had received mediocre ratings from the children.

NATURE OF DISAGREEMENTS

In the examination of the nature of disagreements between the judges and the investigator, it was found that most of the disagreements were slight differences rather than direct contradictions. It is interesting to examine evidence of the extent of disagreement. These will be discussed in relation to the specific characteristic concerned.

Characteristic 5: Accent and Dialect, Manner of Speaking.--In the broadcast *Winabojo*, Judge M states that there is no accent or dialect in the manner of speaking. Judge S agrees with the investigator that the manner of speaking is not realistic in portrayal of the main characters, but easily understood. This apparent contradiction might have been caused by different interpretations of what is meant by unrealistic accent or manner of

speaking. The Indian chief spoke without an accent, which in Judge M's opinion was the correct way to portray the Indian chief, who represented the most cultured of the tribe. In his native Indian language, the chief would not likely be speaking with an accent; therefore, Judge M felt that the chief should speak without any accent or dialect in the English language and that therefore there was rightfully no accent in the program.

The investigator felt that since there was an effort to portray characterization in the old woman's voice and in the eerie voice of the Thunder God the apparent lack of genuine characterization in the chief's voice was not good. The investigator contended that while good characterization did not require an accent in the chief's speech, nevertheless the voice was not genuine or realistic. (See page 78 for further treatment.)

This matter of portrayal of genuine characters through accent and dialect is exceedingly controversial, and the incident recorded here is but one example of the need for more study of this important question of the use of speech in children's programs.

Characteristic 6: English Usage.--In *Fast Sooner Hound*, both judges agreed with the investigator that incorrect English was used, but disagreed on the extent of incorrect English used. Both judges felt there was "no more than was necessary to portray genuine characters." The investigator felt there was "more incorrect English than seemed necessary, in portraying the characters." (See page 75.) The difference of opinion revealed in these disagreements points also to a need for more study of incorrect English in juvenile programs.

In *The Great Geppy*, the differences in opinion between the judges on English usage reveal a definite contradiction. Judge S and the investigator felt there was little or no incorrect English. Judge M stated that incorrect English was used "but no more than seemed necessary to portray genuine characterization." The correct approach to a discussion of this characteristic could be made by playing back the transcription, which either has or has not incorrect English.

Characteristic 7: Slang.--Slight differences in judgments rather than complete contradictions appear in the judges' opinions regarding the use of slang. In *The Great Geppy*, the investigator and two judges agreed that there was no slang, but Judge M stated, "Slang was used but no more than seemed necessary to portray genuine character." Here again the playing of the transcription would answer the question objectively. This difference of opinion also appears in regard to *Mountain Born*.

Characteristic 8: Vocabulary.--There is a direct contradiction on the question of vocabulary in the program *The Great Geppy*. The investigator and Judge S state that there is a "minimum use of colloquial expressions, new words, and phrases not easily understood either through context or through definition." Judge M states that there is an "excessive use of colloquial expressions, new words, and phrases not easily understood either through context or through definition."

The interpretation of what is meant by contextual reading might have caused this difference. It is certain that *The Great Geppy* contains many new words that are not defined. Whether these words are understood by the children through context is, of course, a question. The fact that the program was rated high indicates the new words did not interfere with comprehension. (This factor concerning vocabulary is discussed more fully on pages 71 ff.)

Characteristic 18: Narrator's Voice.--Although the largest number of disagreements is found in this characteristic, the disagreements are not complete contradictions. None of the judges or the investigator thought the narrator's voice was "entirely unsatisfactory, not understood," in any of the programs. Judge M, however, thought the narrator's voice in *The Great Geppy* "revealed personality; genial, sincere, personal quality enriching mood of story but subservient to main theme, in general, outstanding." The investigator and the two other judges felt that the narrator's voice was "satisfactory, not exceptionally good or exceptionally poor."

The same ratings were given by two judges and the investigator concerning *Mountain Born*. Judge H completely disagreed by stating that the narrator's voice was "lacking in personality, announcing rather than storytelling, over-dramatic, not always subservient to the theme." It is obvious that subjectivity increases in this matter of judging a narrator's voice, and the investigator concludes that its subheadings are not yet perfected enough to serve the purpose intended and that there is need for more testing of this particular characteristic; nevertheless, the present study does identify the problem of the narrator's voice as one which greatly affects children's ratings and one which justifies further study.

Characteristic 1: Suspense.--The nature of the disagreement pertaining to suspense is seen in *Mountain Born*. Judge H and the investigator agreed that suspense was "present within some scenes but not unified around a central theme." Judge S judged that "suspense was present for the most part and unified around a central theme." None of the judges or the investigator felt that "suspense was absent for the most part." It must be noted that evidence from the children's discussion reveals that they felt suspense was entirely lacking in this program. These differences of opinion on so important a characteristic as suspense points to the need for more study of this characteristic in relation to school broadcasts.

Chapter VI

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

THIS study of intermediate grade children's reactions to radio adaptations of juvenile books produced for classroom listening included an investigation of the feasibility of obtaining ratings from children of about ten years of age; an analysis of the characteristics that seemed to affect the children's ratings; and to a limited extent an exploration of the relation of classroom listening to other experiences in the curriculum. The underlying purposes of the study were to investigate means through which children's individual ratings of juvenile broadcasts could be obtained and made more directly available to producers of juvenile radio, and to provide children with the experience of evaluating programs produced for their listening.

The classroom provided a laboratory in which a controlled listening audience was guaranteed and in which the radio listening was an integral part of the total experience of the group. An effort was made to arrange the environment so that children's written and oral reactions would be given in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Direct contact with children in a classroom provided for the critical evaluation of procedures and for direct observation of children by juvenile radio specialists, such as directors, producers, and script writers.

The broadcasts consisted of the series, *Tales from Far and Near*, which were adaptations of juvenile fiction. The series was produced on the School of the Air of the Americas, a public service series of the Columbia Broadcasting System. This series was selected for study because it resembled the familiar commercial juvenile broadcasts of

adventurous episodes. Little or no pre-broadcast preparation was essential in order to understand and enjoy these broadcasts. Since the programs were based on books selected by experts, it was believed that the series *Tales from Far and Near* would be superior in content to many of the out-of-school commercial programs. The potential value of such a series to the intermediate grade curriculum was also a factor in the selection of this series of broadcasts.

The programs, for the most part, were heard off the air on Thursday mornings from 9:15 to 9:45 o'clock, from October through May. Under the investigator's guidance, five groups of intermediate grade children in the Horace Mann School of Teachers College, Columbia University, listened and rated five successive series, 1939-1943. Each group heard the programs in the same room through a well-serviced radio or from satisfactory transcriptions.

A rating form adapted to the maturity level of ten-year-old children was used to obtain the individual written ratings and longhand, stenographic, and Dictaphone records were utilized in obtaining the children's oral reactions. Written ratings of certain broadcasts were obtained from other intermediate grade groups who used the main subjects' rating form.

Two separate ratings of each broadcast were made by the main subjects during the last three years of the study, 1941-1943. Each child rated each broadcast immediately after the program was heard. A second rating of each broadcast was made at the end of the series. These two ratings were treated in order to find the trustworthiness of such ratings.

Certain broadcasts that had received extremes in the children's ratings were analyzed for the purpose of identifying characteristics that might have affected the children's ratings. During this phase of the study the investigator's judgments concerning the characteristics was compared with others believed to be competent in evaluating children's experiences.

Adult criteria were used in judging the quality of books from which adaptations were made.

FINDINGS

In this study it was found that children of about ten years of age were capable of rating radio programs with discrimination. The variation among the ratings assigned to the various programs was great enough to indicate that the children were not assigning their ratings by chance. The end-of-the-series ratings given to each program over a five-year period (1939-1943) showed variation as did the end-of-the-broadcast ratings which were obtained for each program during the last three years of the study.

The proportion of the two separate ratings which were either Excellent or Good indicates that these broadcasts were, for the most part, enjoyed by the children. Each of the five groups unanimously recommended the series for the next year's class. (See page 38.)

The percentage of high ratings was greater at the end of the broadcast than at the end of the series. This tendency for programs to receive a lower rating at the end of the series holds for programs which came in the first half of the series and for those which came in the second half. The evidence does not indicate that a position at the end of the series is necessarily more conducive to a high rating than a position early in the series. (See page 34.)

Certain programs have been identified as receiving widespread approval or widespread disapproval from the main subjects participating in this study. (See pages 29-31.) Ratings of certain broadcasts by other groups of children reveal similar extremes. (See page 47.)

Direct contact with ten-year-old children over a continuous period of time *in the classroom* provided a satisfactory environment for obtaining children's reactions to school broadcasts. (See page 9.)

A simple rating form adapted to the maturity level of ten-year-old children proved satisfactory in obtaining children's individual written ratings to school broadcasts. (See page 16.)

Characteristics that seemed to affect children's ratings of these broadcasts were as follows: *suspense*;

entertainment; humor; social concepts and subject matter; vocabulary, including the presence of new words and phrases, accent and dialect, slang and grammatical errors; the selection and number of scenes; the number of characters; dialogue scenes including crowd scenes; the quality of narration; and the utilization of music and transition techniques. Production techniques contributed in some measure to these characteristics; however, their existence in a program was determined chiefly by the script. Production techniques played a most important part in the development of other characteristics including the *clarity of the voice; its genuineness in portraying character; and its contrast in identifying different speakers.* (See page 77.) The production techniques, furthermore, greatly influenced the *nature and subordination of sound effects; the timing of transitions; and the use of music not only for transition purposes but also for its part in telling a story.*

The specific findings pertaining to characteristics which seemed to affect children's ratings were summarized as the characteristics were presented. Repetition at this point would be superfluous. It is hoped that the summaries presented in relation to concrete evidence that appears in Chapter IV will be meaningful to producers, teachers, or others interested in the improvement of juvenile radio or televised programs adapted from juvenile books. (See pages 65-66; 70; 77; 80-81; 85; 87; 89; 104-105; 108; 110; 112; 116.)

An important factor which influenced most of these characteristics was the selection of the book from which the broadcast was adapted. The importance of the proper selection of the book for school broadcasts is further seen in the fact that children expressed the desire to read those books which had been rated Excellent as broadcasts. (See page 112.) Likewise, there was a lack in the desire to read the books which had been least enjoyed as broadcasts.

An examination of certain books upon which broadcasts were based revealed the presence of undesirable social concepts. (See page 114.)

In this study there is no evidence to indicate that adaptations of books in which a child is a main character were more enjoyed than broadcasts without a child as a main character. So far as children's enjoyment of these broadcasts was concerned this factor was irrelevant in the present study.

The investigator's judgments pertaining to the extent to which certain characteristics appeared in broadcasts were quite similar to the judgments of three other people competent in evaluating children's experiences.

The broadcasts chosen for this study contributed to the enrichment of ten-year-old children's classroom activities. Critical thinking is evident in the data. The subject-matter areas of oral and silent reading and English were enriched, thereby providing a valuable experience in the communication of ideas.

Through the rating of programs designed for their listening, the children participated in a community enterprise within their level of maturity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recent revolutionary improvements in recording devices increase the potential value of radio adaptations of children's books. The study reported in the preceding chapters was carried out at a time when broadcasts of radio adaptations of juvenile books for elementary school use was relatively limited. Frequency modulation was undeveloped. The cost of radio transcriptions prohibited their wide use for evaluation purposes. The rapidly changing world of radio has, however, made possible more extensive application of these improvements. Entire transcribed radio series of children's books are now on permanent twelve-inch recordings. The urgent need for more thorough evaluation in classrooms of these recordings can be seen in the simple fact that errors in a radio program are heard but once, while those on phonograph records are relatively permanent. It seems highly desirable, therefore, that a screening plan be devised in which juvenile phonograph records, transcribed radio series, or programs off the air can be rated in experi-

mental classrooms before their widespread use in schools or in homes. It is hoped that the procedure reported in this study will offer suggestions to others interested in techniques for evaluating children's broadcasts, recordings, or televised programs.

More experimentation in the use of wire and tape recordings as a less expensive means of producing and evaluating juvenile broadcasts seems highly desirable.

An inter-city plan for the exchange of tape recordings of school broadcasts should be more widely utilized. Such a plan seems particularly timely since the responsibility for school broadcasts has now been shifted from the national networks to the local stations. It is hoped that this shift will not jeopardize the production of school broadcasts.

A thorough study of the problem of financing school broadcasts on a self-supporting basis is timely. Broadcasts of high quality require funds, and school broadcasts are no exception. Frequently they are produced on too limited a budget to insure a high standard of production. In a nation world-renowned for its financial acumen, it should be possible on a self-supporting basis to produce for American children school broadcasts of superior quality. It is noted that the production of children's books is a well-established business. Earning one's way is an old American custom that seems to have been overlooked in the production of school broadcasts, which seem still to be the "poor relation" in the radio industry.

The problem of age levels toward which school broadcasts are directed also requires more research. Programs particularly fitted for specific groups, such as the intermediate grades which include nearly 6,000,000 children of about nine to about twelve years of age, should be more carefully studied. It is not out of the realm of possibility to organize a large classroom audience within this age level alone. The use of recordings for the inter-city exchange of such broadcasts as *Tales from Far and Near* would soon establish, inexpensively, a substantial school audience. Evaluations could thus be obtained

through the organized ratings of many children. These ratings could be made available to producers cooperating in the undertaking.

Inter-city exchange of transcribed broadcasts might also be enlarged to include the exchange of juvenile transcribed radio series with our neighbors in other countries. Experimental work of the investigator in this regard is encouraging. Through the cooperation of the British Broadcasting Company, during World War II, recordings of children's activities were sent by bomber to England. Unfortunately, this gesture toward international understanding stopped with the war. The exchange of recordings of peace-time interests among children of different nations seems highly desirable. The improvement in recordings should make this activity a practical reality.

The production of superior radio or televised programs for children can be attained through the cooperative effort of the producer, the educator, and the child. This coordination requires the highest quality of creative leadership.

NOTES

I. INTRODUCTION

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2. V. G. Stone, "Children's Preferences for Radio Programs" (Ph.D. dissertation; Berkeley, Cal.: University of California, 1937).
3. W. R. Clark, "Radio Listening Habits of Children," *Social Psychology*, XII (1940), 131-149.
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5. Dorothy Lewis and Dorothy L. McFadden, *Program Patterns for Young Listeners* (Washington: National Association of Broadcasters, 1945), p. 2.
6. Tracy F. Tyler, *The Journal of the Association for Education by Radio*, VII, No. 5 (January, 1948), 49.
7. *Service Bulletin of the FREC*, U.S. Office of Education, X, No. 7 (November-December, 1948), 1.
8. Margaret Cuthbert, "Children's Radio Listening," *Childcraft*, Vol. VIII (1942).
9. B. L. Mitchell, "The Home Radio Listening of Wilmette School Children" (mimeographed report, P.T.A., Wilmette, Ill., 1940).
10. John James DeBoer, *The Emotional Response of Children to Radio Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), p. 221.
11. Seerley Reid, "Audience of Network School Broadcasts, Bulletin No. 34, *Evaluation of School Broadcasts* (Columbus: Ohio State University, September, 1941), p. 7.
12. C.B.S. *Listener's Guide*, July, 1945.
13. Tracy F. Tyler, *The Journal of the Association for Education by Radio*, VIII, No. 3 (November, 1948), 25.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
15. Levenson, *Service Bulletin of the FREC*, X, No. 7 (November-December, 1948), 3.
16. *Time* magazine, January 31, 1949, p. 8.
17. For sources of transcriptions for children, see Lewis and McFadden, *Program Patterns for Young Listeners*, pp. 63-65.
18. Harold Kent, in *Proceedings, School Broadcast Conference* (Chicago, 1940), pp. 61-62, quoted by William B. Levenson, in *Teaching through Radio* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1945), pp. 206-207.

II. PROCEDURES

1. Levenson, *Teaching through Radio*, p. 207.
2. Nila Mack, producer, Columbia Broadcasting System. A. Murray Dyer, script writer, Columbia Broadcasting System. Dorothy Gordon, author of *All Children Listen*. Margaret Cuthbert, National Broadcasting Company, director of women's and children's programs. Olive Salt, British Broadcasting Company, producer of *Children's Hour* in England.
3. U.S. Office of Education, *Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1944-46* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1949), chap. i, "Statistical Summary of Education, 1945-1946," p. 10.
4. A few programs were based on other sources, poetry, magazines, and a ship's log.
5. Mae O'Brien, "I Listen to Children," *Teachers College Record* (April, 1941), pp. 622-627.
6. L. A. Eisenberg, *Children and Radio Programs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), pp. 34 and 175.
7. John Price McKay, *The Radio as a Factor in the Lives of Sixth Grade Children* (Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri, 1937), p. 83.
8. Seerley Reid, "Preliminary Report, Children's Enjoyment of *Tales from Far and Near*, October 19, 1939, to January 18, 1940," Preliminary Studies Bulletin No. 13, *Evaluation of School Broadcasts* (Columbus: Ohio State University, April, 1940).

9. Seerley Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-five School Broadcasts Produced by the Columbia Broadcasting System, 1940-1941." Bulletin No. 38, *Evaluation of School Broadcasts* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1941).

10. Dictaphone recordings were provided through the courtesy of The Dictaphone Corporation, New York, New York.

III. TREATMENT OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

1. Reid, "Preliminary Report, Children's Enjoyment of *Tales from Far and Near*, October 19, 1939, to January 18, 1940."

2. Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-five School Broadcasts Produced by the Columbia Broadcasting System, 1940-1941."

IV. CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHILDREN'S APPRAISALS

1. Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-five School Broadcasts," p. 31.

2. Dictaphone recordings provided through the courtesy of The Dictaphone Corporation (real names of children changed).

3. Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-five School Broadcasts," p. 27.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Adapted from Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy, *Fast Sooner Hound* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1942).

6. Adapted from Elizabeth Yates, *Mountain Born* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1942).

7. Adapted from James Cloyd Bowman, *Winabojo* (Chicago: Albert Whitman Company, 1941).

8. From Somerset Maugham's speech on the occasion of the presentation of the book *Of Human Bondage* to the Library of Congress, April 21, 1946.

9. *Time* magazine, January 31, 1949.

10. Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-five School Broadcasts," p. 20.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*, p. 24.

13. G. L. Kittredge, as quoted in *Webster's International Dictionary*, second edition, 1940.

14. Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-five School Broadcasts," pp. 39-40.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

17. Seerley Reid and Norman Woelfel, "How to Judge a School Broadcast," *Evaluation of School Broadcasts* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1941), p. 12.

18. Seerley Reid, "The Fourth R: a Critical Examination of Three Series of School Broadcasts Produced by the Columbia Broadcasting System, 1940-1941" (Columbus: Ohio State University, unpublished dissertation, 1942), pp. 243, 278.

19. Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-Five School Broadcasts," p. 23.

20. Reid and Woelfel, "How to Judge a School Broadcast," p. 17.

21. E. Evalyn Grumbine, *Reaching Juvenile Markets* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1938), pp. 232-234.

22. K. H. Baker, "Radio Listening and Socio-economic Status," *Psychological Record* (1937), p. 138.

23. W. L. Gottenberg and R. L. Neal, "Radio at Home," *Phi Delta Kappan* (May, 1940), pp. 418, 421.

24. Adapted from Glen Rounds, *The Blind Colt* (New York: Holiday House, 1942).

25. Grumbine, *Reaching Juvenile Markets*, pp. 232-234.

26. Anne T. Eaton in the *New York Times*: "Mr. Round's finest piece of writing is an unforgettable animal portrait drawn with understanding and moving simplicity." Quoted from *The Children's Catalogue*.

27. Levenson, *Teaching through Radio*, p. 131.

28. *Ibid.*

29. Percentage of Excellent ratings at the end of broadcast was 78 per cent, rank 13. Corresponding ratings for the end of the series was 50 per cent, rank 11.

30. Reid, "Children's Enjoyment and Criticism of *Tales from Far and Near*," p. 2.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

34. Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-five School Broadcasts," p. 41.

35. *Ibid.*

36. Reid, "The Fourth R: a Critical Examination of Three Series of School Broadcasts Produced by the Columbia Broadcasting System, 1940-41," p. 262.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 443, 444, 445.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 250.

40. *Ibid.*, pp. 445-446.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 244.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 427.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 231.

44. Albert Crews, *Radio Production Directing* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1944), p. 414.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 415.

46. Levenson, *Teaching through Radio*, p. 108.

47. Crews, *Radio Production Directing*, p. 415.

48. Reid, "A Critical Appraisal of Twenty-five School Broadcasts," p. 11.

49. *Teachers Manual and Classroom Guide of the American School of the Air*, 1939, second semester, p. 65.

50. *Ibid.*, 1941-1942, p. 83.

51. *Ibid.*, 1942-1943, p. 77.

52. *Ibid.*, 1943-1944, p. 62.

53. *Children's Catalogue* (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1943).

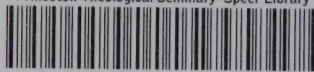
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